IN STORY-LAND

ELIZABETH HARRISON

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IN STORY-LAND

BY

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Elementary College

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I LOVINGLY DEDICATE THIS BOOK TO

MY FRIEND,

Kate Tiffany Richardson,

who, from childhood, through girlhood, far into womanhood, illumined my life with a radiant love and sympathy that made every ideal seem possible, and with whose four little children I have many a time journeyed into STORY-LAND.

ELIZABETH HARRISON.

Chicago, Ill.

PREFACE.

It is not expected that the stories in this book will be told in their present form to Kindergarten children, as experience has shown that each Kindergartner must modify her story to suit the needs and capacities of her children, and must learn to take from any story just so much as may be helpful to her in creating a fresh story for the occasion. It is hoped, however, that they may serve the mother in her home reading with her group of children, and also that my colaborers in primary and second grade schools may sometimes use them for Friday afternoon readings.

A friendly critic has suggested that I add "One story a day is enough for a child." This is certainly the case if the story is to make any deep or lasting impression.

E. H.

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LITTLE BETA AND THE LAME GIANT.

Near the top of a high, high mountain there lived a great giant. He was a very wonderful giant indeed. From the door of his rocky cave he could look into the distance and see for miles and miles over the surrounding country, even to the point where the land touched the great ocean, yet so clearly that he could observe the smile or the frown on a child's face three miles away. More wonderful still, he could look through the darkest cloud which ever covered the sky and see the sun still shining beyond and above it. And then his hands! Oh how I wish you could have seen his hands! They were so large and strong. Such wonderful hands, too! With them he could lift up a rock as big as this room and set it to one side. Sometimes his fingers could make the sweetest kind of music come from a crude violin which he had fashioned for himself.

Then, too, he knew so much, and he knew it well. I don't believe that ten of the wisest men that our universities ever sent out

could have told you such extraordinary things. He knew all about every plant which grew on the mountain, and just where the rich mines of gold and silver were hidden inside the mountain. He could have pointed out to you which pebbles could be polished into emeralds and topazes and sapphires and which were worthless. Had you asked him he could have taken you to the secret spring from which flowed the sparkling stream of healing waters, sought by all the sick folks in the country round. He was such a wonderful giant that it would take me the whole day to tell you of all the things which he could do — but — *he was lame* and somehow could never get down the mountain to where the ordinary mortal lived. So for ages he had been alone upon his mountain top, seeing all the people below him, loving them with all his heart, and knowing just what would help them, yet never being able to come near to them.

In one of the valleys of the great mountain lived a little maiden called Beta. She was so small that most people thought her a young child and so weak that she could not even carry a bucket of water from the well to the house. Then too, she was a very plain looking little girl, not at all pretty. Her mother

used to say to her: "My dear daughter, you are neither rich, nor clever, nor beautiful, therefore you must learn to be useful to others if you would be loved."

The little maiden often wondered how she was to be of any use to the people about her. She would say to herself, "I have no money to give to them; my hands are not skilled enough to do much work for them and my brain is not quick, therefore I can not give them beautiful thoughts which will help them." Still she was a loving-hearted little girl, and love, you know, always finds a way to be helpful.

One day it occurred to her that she could gather some wild flowers and take them to the old woman who lived all alone at the end of the village and who was so deaf that nobody ever tried to talk to her.

With this thought in mind she started out in search of the brightest flowers she could find. She climbed the mountain side and gathered *a whole armful* of beautiful yellow golden-rod and purple asters and red Indian pinks. These she carried joyfully to the little house at the end of the village. They made the dingy old room take on a look of warmth and happiness. Gay as they were,

however, the face of the old deaf woman was brighter still as she said, "Bless you, my child, bless you! Who but little Beta would ever have thought of bringing flowers to me."

The next day Beta thought she would take some flowers to the blind weaver who made all the carpets that the villagers used. "This time," she said to herself, "I must hunt for the flowers which have a sweet odor, as he cannot see their gay colors." So she gathered some wild roses and some sweet scented violets and some witch hazel. As she entered his small shop he lifted his head from his work and said, "Ah me, what is this I smell? It has been many a day since I have been near enough to the mountain's own flowers to breathe in their perfume." Beta placed them in a mug near his loom and as she ran home she was very happy, yet she hardly knew why.

After this she went daily to the mountain to gather flowers for some dear soul who could not go out to get them. Sometimes they were taken to the gentle mother who had so many children that she never found time to leave her home. Sometimes they went to the village church and made the Sunday seem more beautiful than other days. Each time she climbed higher and higher as she had soon learned that

the rarer and more beautiful flowers could only be found far up the mountain. At last one day, when she had climbed farther than she had ever ventured before, she suddenly came upon the lame giant sitting on a large stump in front of his cave. In his hand was his violin, but he was not playing; his face wore a thoughtful, almost a sad look.

Beta was so frightened that the flowers dropped from her hands and she nearly stopped breathing. She had never before in all her life, seen a *real, live giant.* He was so big that she could hardly believe her own eyes as she looked at him. Her first impulse was to run down the mountain as quickly as possible, but somehow, the very sight of such a wonderful being held her spell-bound, so she stood motionless, gazing at him from behind a huge rock.

Soon he put his violin in position under his chin and taking up his bow began to play. He played so softly and sweetly that little Beta felt sure he could not be wicked and cruel as were the giants she had read about. Little by little she came shyly toward him. As soon as he saw her he laid down his violin and held out his hand, smiling as he did so. "Come near to me, child," he said, "I will not hurt

you." Beta thus encouraged, came slowly forward.

"Tell me, little one," said he gently, "from whence came you, and how did you find your way so far up the mountain side? None but strong mountain guides have ever before come near my cave." "I was gathering flowers," answered little Beta, "and I thought I might find some blue forget-me-nots among these rocks." "So you have learned already, have you, that forget-me-nots can best be found near the mountain tops." With that he laughed softly to himself. His laugh was such a kindly laugh that it took away all fear and made Beta feel quite at home with him. "What is your name?" said she, "and why do you live up here? Do you not sometimes get lonesome?" The great giant did not answer her, but began talking about something else. In a short time he had led the little maiden into telling him all about herself and the people of the village and the flower gathering. It was not until he rose to point out to her where forget-me-nots could be found in abundance, that she noticed he was lame. She had soon gathered a whole apron full of the beautiful flowers and bidding him good-bye she climbed down the mountain, sometimes

slipping and sliding, but always holding fast to the hem of her apron that the flowers might not be lost.

Many times after that she climbed the mountain to the cave of the giant and sat on a little stone at his feet while he told her stories of things which had happened in the village long before any of the people who lived in it were born. She loved best to listen to the tales of gods and heroes of the olden times. Then when she was tired of stories he would show her where the flowers grew most profusely. Little by little he taught her to know the herbs which were good for sick people. Oftentimes they were very humble looking plants which she would have passed by unnoticed. She soon learned how to brew these into drinks and medicines for the feeble and sick folks of the village. Sometimes, though not often, he would play on his violin for her. He always played such strange, weird music that it made her think of Siegfried, and of Lohengrin and the white swan, or of other beautiful beings whom she had never seen, but of whom she had heard.

Each day when she returned to her home she told the people of the village about the wonderful giant who lived so high up the mountain

that its top could be seen from his cave door, but they only laughed and said, "Little Beta has been dreaming." Even after they had learned to call upon her for herbs with which to poultice bruised limbs and strengthen weak stomachs or quiet restless fevers, they gave no heed to what she said about the giant.

Years passed by and the little maiden still continued to climb the mountain to learn of the lame giant more and more of what was wonderful and beautiful in the world about her. Much climbing in the open air had made her strong and well. As time wore on, she unconsciously made a path up the mountain side, which of course caused the climbing to be much easier than in the days when she had to scramble over the rocks and push aside the underbrush to make her way up. The path too, was firm and smooth now, with no stones suddenly slipping from beneath her feet and causing painful falls.

At last one day Beta persuaded two or three of her companions to go with her to the cave. Now that there was a respectable path, the undertaking did not seem so foolish as in the days when Beta had gone scrambling up the rocks, nobody knew whither. So they laughingly consented to go, more to please Beta,

whom they had learned to love, than with any expectation of seeing a real giant at the end of the journey. Therefore they were greatly astonished when, after much climbing, a sudden turn in the road brought them face to face with a being five times as large as an ordinary man, whose strong hands looked as if they might easily crush any one of them, yet whose kindly face re-assured them.

The great giant received them pleasantly, as they were little Beta's friends, and soon they were eagerly plying him with all sorts of questions. "Did he know those strange creatures, the centaurs, whose bodies were half man and half horse? They had heard that these centaurs lived somewhere among the mountains, and that they could teach any boy how to become a great hero. Had he ever ridden on the back of Pegasus, the flying horse, whom none but giants could ride without tumbling off? Did he ever drink from the fountain of youth which had the power to keep mortals from growing old? Was it true that he could change the dirt beneath their feet into golden money?" All these and many other questions they asked him and to each he gave an answer.

That night, when they returned to the village,

they could talk of nothing else but the wonderful giant whose home was near the mountain top. Next day a larger number of the villagers climbed the mountain to the cave, and each succeeding day more were persuaded to make the journey, until everybody in the little valley, that is, everybody who could climb, had visited the lame giant. Then they began to discuss how they could open a road up the mountain to the cave. Finally they decided to unite together and build a broad, winding road, one wide enough to let horses and vehicles pass each other. "Then," said they, "we can take our dear old grandsires and granddames and even our little children up to the good giant that he may teach them also."

Soon the whole village was humming with the sound of pickaxe and spade. Everybody worked and everybody was eager and happy in the work. It took a long time, several years, in fact, before the road was completed, but it was done at last and it proved a greater blessing than they had anticipated, for not only could they now drive up the mountain to the lame giant's cave, but *he* was able to come down to them! This was a thing of which they had never dreamed, and great was the rejoicing on the occasion of his first visit to them.

Years passed by and the little valley became the most famous spot on the whole earth, so rich was its soil, so remarkable the products it sent out. People came from all over the land now to visit the lame giant and learn of him some of the wonderful secrets which had been hidden for centuries, and all loved him and revered him.

My story would not be complete if I did not tell you that he too became less lame, since the journeys up and down the mountain helped to make him much stronger.

Perhaps some day you may go to this valley yourselves and learn how to do many wonderful things, which now seem impossible to you.

THE LINE OF GOLDEN LIGHT;

OR,

THE LITTLE BLIND SISTER.

Once upon a time there lived a child whose name was Avilla. She was sweet and loving, and fair to look upon, and had everything in the world to make her happy, — but she had a little blind sister, and Avilla could not be perfectly happy as long as her sister's eyes were closed so that she could not see God's beautiful world, nor enjoy His bright sunshine. Little Avilla kept wondering if there was not something that she could do which would open this blind sister's eyes.

At last, one day, she heard of an old, old woman, nobody knew how old, who had lived for hundreds of years in a dark cave, not many miles away. This queer, old woman knew a secret enchantment, by means of which the blind could receive their sight. The child, Avilla, asked her parents' permission to make a journey to the cave, in order that she might try to persuade the old woman to tell her this

secret. "Then," exclaimed she, joyfully, "my dear sister need sit no longer in darkness." Her parents gave a somewhat unwilling consent, as they heard many strange and wicked stories about the old woman. At last, however, one fine spring morning, Avilla started on her journey. She had a long distance to walk, but the happy thoughts in her heart made the time pass quickly, and the soft, cool breeze seemed to be whispering a song to her all the way.

When she came to the mouth of the cave, it looked so dark and forbidding that she almost feared to enter it, but the thought of her little blind sister gave her courage, and she walked in. At first she could see nothing, for all the sunshine was shut out by the frowning rocks that guarded the entrance. Soon, however, she discerned the old woman sitting on a stone chair, spinning a pile of flax into a fine, fine thread. She seemed bent nearly double with age, and her face wore a look of worry and care, which made her appear still older.

The child Avilla came close to her side, and thought, she is so aged that she must be hard of hearing. The old woman did not turn her head, nor stop her spinning. Avilla waited a

moment, and then took fresh courage, and said, "I have come to ask you if you will tell me how I can cure my blind sister?" The strange creature turned and stared at her as if she were very much surprised; she then spoke in a deep, hollow voice, so hollow that it sounded as if she had not spoken for a very long time. "Oh," said she with a sneer, "I can tell you well enough, but you'll not do it. People who can see, trouble themselves very little about those who are blind!" This last was said with a sigh, and then she scowled at Avilla until the child's heart began to beat very fast. But the thought of her little blind sister made her brave again, and she cried out, "Oh *please* tell me. I will do anything to help my dear sister!" The old woman looked long and earnestly at her this time. She then stooped down and searched in the heap of the fine-spun thread which lay at her side until she found the end of it. This she held out to the child, saying, "Take this and carry it all around the world, and when you have done that, come to me and I will show you how your blind sister may be cured." Little Avilla thanked her and eagerly seized the tiny thread, and wrapping it carefully around her hand that she might not lose

it, turned and hastened out of the close, damp cave.

She had not traveled far before she looked back to be sure the thread had not broken, it was so thin. Imagine her surprise to see that instead of its being a gray thread of spun flax, it was a thread of golden light, that glittered and shone in the sunlight, as if it were made of the most precious stuff on earth. She felt sure now that it must be a magic thread, and that it somehow would help her to cure her blind sister. So she hastened on, glad and happy.

Soon, however, she approached a dark, dense forest. No ray of sunlight seemed ever to have fallen on the trunks of its trees. In the distance she thought she could hear the growl of bears and the roar of lions. Her heart almost stopped beating. "Oh, I can never go through that gloomy forest," said she to herself, and her eyes filled with tears. She turned to retrace her steps, when the soft breeze which still accompanied her whispered, "Look at the thread you have been carrying! Look at the golden thread!" She looked back, and the bright, tiny line of light seemed to be actually smiling at her, as it stretched across the soft greensward, far into the dis-

tance, and, strange to say, each tiny blade of grass which it had touched, had blossomed into a flower. So, as the little girl looked back, she saw a flowery path with a glittering line of golden light running through it. "How beautiful!" she exclaimed, "I did not notice the flowers as I came along, but the enchanted thread will make the next traveler see them."

This thought filled her with such joy that she pushed forward into the dark woods. Sometimes she knocked her head against a tree which stood in her way; sometimes she almost feared she was lost, but every now and then she would look back and the sight of the tiny thread of golden light always renewed her courage. Once in a while she felt quite sure that she could see the nose of some wild beast poking out in front of her, but when she came nearer it proved to be the joint in a tree trunk, or some strange fungus which had grown on a low branch. Then she would laugh at her own fear and go on. One of the wonderful things about the mysterious little thread which she carried in her hand was, that it seemed to open a path behind it, so that one could easily follow in her foot-steps without stumbling over fallen trees, or bumping against living ones. Every now and then a gray squirrel

would frisk by her in a friendly fashion, as if to assure her that she was not alone, even in the twilight of the dark woods. By and by she came to the part of the forest where the trees were less dense, and soon she was out in the glad sunshine again.

But now a new difficulty faced her. As far as she could see stretched a low, swampy marsh of wet land. The mud and slime did not look very inviting, but the thought of her little blind sister came to her again, and she bravely plunged into the mire. The dirty, dripping mud clung to her dress and made her feet so heavy that she grew weary lifting them out of it. Sometimes she seemed to be stuck fast, and it was only with a great effort that she could pull out, first one foot, and then the other. A lively green frog hopped along beside her, and seemed to say, in his funny, croaking voice, "Never mind the mud, you'll soon be through it." When she had at last reached the end of the slippery, sticky marsh, and stood once more on firm ground, she looked back at the tiny thread of golden light which trailed along after her. *What* do you think had happened? Wherever the mysterious and beautiful thread had touched the mud, the water had dried up, and the earth had

become firm and hard, so that any other person who might wish to cross the swampy place could walk on firm ground. This made the child Avilla so happy, that she began to sing softly to herself.

Soon, however, her singing ceased. As the day advanced, the air grew hotter and hotter. The trees had long ago disappeared, and now the grass became parched and dry, until at last she found herself in the midst of a dreary desert. For miles and miles the scorching sand stretched on every side. She could not even find a friendly rock in whose shadow she might rest for a time. The blazing sun hurt her eyes and made her head ache, and the hot sand burned her feet. Still she toiled on, cheered by a swarm of yellow butterflies that fluttered just ahead of her. At last the end of the desert was reached, just as the sun disappeared behind a crimson cloud. Dusty and weary, the child Avilla was about to throw herself down on the ground to rest. As she did so, her eyes turned to look once more at the golden thread which had trailed behind her all day on the hot sand. Lo, and behold! What did she see? Tall shade trees had sprung up along the path she had traveled, and each tiny grain of sand that the wonder-

ful thread had touched, was now changed into a diamond, or ruby, or emerald, or some other precious stone. On one side the pathway across the desert shone and glittered, while on the other the graceful trees cast a cool and refreshing shade.

Little Avilla stood amazed as she looked at the beautiful trees and the sparkling gems. All feeling of weariness was gone. The air now seemed mild and refreshing, and she thought that she could hear in the distance some birds singing their evening songs. One by one the bright stars came out in the quiet sky above her head, as if to keep guard while she slept through the night.

The next morning she started forward on her long journey round the world. She traveled quite pleasantly for a while, thinking of how cool and shady the desert path would now be for any one who might have to travel it, and of the precious jewels she had left for some one else to gather up. She could not stop for them herself, she was too anxious to press forward and finish her task, in order that her little blind sister might the sooner see.

After a time she came to some rough rocks tumbled about in great confusion, as if angry

giants had hurled them at each other. Soon the path grew steeper and steeper, and the rocks sharper and sharper, until they cut her feet. Before her she could see nothing but more rocks until they piled themselves into a great mountain, which frowned down upon her, as much as to say, "How dare you attempt to climb to my summit?" The brave child hesitated. Just then two strong eagles with outspread wings rose from their nest of sticks on the side of a steep cliff near by, and soared majestically and slowly aloft. As they passed far above her head they uttered a loud cry which seemed to say, "Be brave and strong and you shall meet us at the mountain-top."

Sometimes the ragged edges of the rocks tore her dress, and sometimes they caught the tiny golden thread, and tangled it so that she had to turn back and loosen it from their hold. The road was very steep and she was compelled to sit down every few minutes and get her breath. Still she climbed on, keeping the soaring eagles always in sight. As she neared the top, she turned and looked back at the enchanted thread of golden light which she had carried through all the long, strange journey. Another marvelous thing had hap-

pened! The rugged path of sharp, broken rocks, had changed into broad and beautiful white marble steps, over which trailed the shining thread of light. She knew that she had made a pathway up this difficult mountain and her heart rejoiced.

She turned again to proceed on her journey, when, only a short distance in front of her, she saw the dark cave in which lived the strange old woman who had bidden her carry the line of light around the world. She hastened forward, and on entering the cave, she saw the old creature, almost bent double, still spinning the mysterious thread. Avilla ran forward and cried out, "I have done all you told me to do, now give sight to my sister?" The old woman sprang to her feet, seized the thread of golden light and exclaimed, "At last! at last! I am freed!"

Then came so strange and wonderful a change that Avilla could hardly believe her own eyes. Instead of the ugly, cross-looking old crone, there stood a beautiful princess, with long golden hair, and tender blue eyes, her face radiant with joy. Her story was soon told. Hundreds of years ago she had been changed into the bent old woman, and shut up in the dark cave on the mountain-side, because

she, a daughter of the King, had been selfish and idle, thinking only of herself, and her punishment had been that she must remain thus disguised and separated from all companions and friends until she could find someone who would be generous and brave enough to take the long, dangerous journey around the world for the sake of others. Her mother had been a fairy princess and had taught her many things which we mortals have yet to learn. She showed the child Avilla how, by dipping the golden thread into a spring of ordinary water, she could change the water into golden water, which glittered and sparkled like liquid sunshine. Filling a pitcher with this they hastened together to where the little blind sister sat in darkness waiting for some one to come and lead her home. The beautiful princess told Avilla to dip her hands into the bowl of enchanted water, and then press them upon the closed eyes of her sister. They opened! And the little blind girl could see!

After that the fairy princess came and lived with little Avilla and her sister, and taught them how to do many wonderful things, of which I have not time to tell you to-day.

PRINCE HARWEDA AND THE MAGIC PRISON.

Litttle Harweda was born a prince. His father was King over all the land and his mother was the most beautiful Queen the world had ever seen and Prince Harweda was their only child. From the day of his birth everything that love or money could do for him had been done. The very wind of heaven was made to fan over an æolian harp that it might enter his room, not as a strong fresh breeze, but as a breath of music. Reflectors were so arranged in the windows that twice as much moonlight fell on his crib as on that of any ordinary child. The pillow on which his head rested was made out of the down from humming birds breasts and the water in which his face and hands were washed was always steeped in rose leaves before being brought to the nursery. Everything that could be done was done, and nothing which could add to his ease or comfort was left undone.

But his parents, although they were King and Queen, were not very wise, for they never

thought of making the young prince think of anybody but himself and he had never in all his life given up any one of his comforts that somebody else might have a pleasure. So, of course, he grew to be selfish and peevish, and by the time he was five years old he was so disagreeable that nobody loved him. "Dear, dear! what shall we do?" said the poor Queen mother and the King only sighed and answered "Ah, what indeed!" They were both very much grieved at heart for they well knew that little Harweda, although he was a prince, would never grow up to be a really great King unless he could make his people love him.

At last they decided to send for his fairy god-mother and see if she could suggest anything which would cure Prince Harweda of always thinking about himself. "Well, well, well!" exclaimed the god-mother when they had laid the case before her — "This is a pretty state of affairs! and I his god-mother too! Why wasn't I called in sooner?" She then told them that she would have to think a day and a night and a day again before she could offer them any assistance. "But," added she, "if I take the child in charge you must promise not to interfere for a whole year." The King and Queen gladly promised

that they would not speak to or even see their son for the required time if the fairy god-mother would only cure him of his selfishness. "We'll see about that," said the god-mother, "Humph, expecting to be a King some day and not caring for anybody but himself — a fine King he'll make!" With that off she flew and the King and Queen saw nothing more of her for a day and a night and another day. Then back she came in a great hurry. "Give me the Prince," said she; "I have his house all ready for him. One month from to-day I'll bring him back to you. Perhaps he'll be cured and perhaps he won't. If he is not cured then we shall try two months next time. We'll see, we'll see." Without any more ado she picked up the astonished young prince and flew away with him as lightly as if he were nothing but a feather or a straw. In vain the poor queen wept and begged for a last kiss. Before she had wiped her eyes, the fairy god-mother and Prince Harweda were out of sight.

They flew a long distance until they reached a great forest. When they had come to the middle of it, down flew the fairy, and in a minute more the young prince was standing on the green grass beside a beautiful pink

marble palace that looked something like a good sized summer house.

"This is your home," said the god-mother, "in it you will find everything you need and you can do just as you choose with your time." Little Harweda was delighted at this for there was nothing in the world he liked better than to do as he pleased, so he tossed his cap up into the air and ran into the lovely little house without so much as saying "Thank you" to his god-mother. "Humph," said she as he disappeared, "you'll have enough of it before you are through with it, my fine prince." With that off she flew.

Prince Harweda had no sooner set his foot inside the small rose-colored palace than the iron door shut with a bang and locked itself. For you must know by this time that it was an enchanted house, as of course, all houses are that are built by fairies.

Prince Harweda did not mind being locked in, as he cared very little for the great beautiful outside world, and the new home which was to be *all his own* was very fine, and he was eager and impatient to examine it. Then too he thought that when he was tired of it, all he would have to do would be to kick on the door and a servant from somewhere would come

and open it,— he had always had a servant ready to obey his slightest command.

His fairy god-mother had told him that it was *his* house, therefore he was interested in looking at everything in it.

The floor was made of a beautiful red copper that shone in the sunlight like burnished gold and seemed almost a dark red in the shadow. He had never seen anything half so fine before. The ceiling was of mother-of-pearl and showed a constant changing of tints of red and blue and yellow and green, all blending into the gleaming white, as only mother-of-pearl can. From the middle of this handsome ceiling hung a large gilded bird cage containing a beautiful bird, which just at this moment was singing a glad song of welcome to the Prince. Harweda, however, cared very little about birds, so he took no notice of the songster.

Around on every side were costly divans with richly embroidered coverings and on which were many sizes of soft down pillows. "Ah," thought the Prince, "here I can lounge at my ease with no one to call me to stupid lessons!" Wonderfully carved jars and vases of wrought gold and silver stood about on the floor and each was filled with a different kind of perfume. "This is deli-

clous," said Prince Harweda. "Now I can have all the sweet odors I want without the trouble of going out into the garden for roses or lilies."

In the center of the room was a fountain of sparkling water which leaped up and fell back into its marble basin with a kind of rythmical sound that made a faint, dreamy music very pleasant to listen to.

On a table near at hand were various baskets of the most tempting pears and grapes and peaches, and near them were dishes of all kinds of sweetmeats. "Good," said the greedy young prince, "that is what I like best of all," and therewith he fell to eating the fruit and sweetmeats as fast as he could cram them into his mouth. He ate so much he had a pain in his stomach, but strange to say, the table was just as full as when he began, for no sooner did he reach his hand out and take a soft mellow pear or a rich, juicy peach than another pear or peach took its place in the basket. The same thing occurred when he helped himself to chocolate drops or marsh-mallows or any of the other confectionery upon the table. For, of course, if the little palace was enchanted, everything in it was enchanted, also.

When Prince Harweda had eaten until he could eat no more he threw himself down upon one of the couches and an invisible hand gently stroked his hair until he fell asleep. When he awoke he noticed for the first time the walls which, by the way, were really the strangest part of his new home. They had in them twelve long, checkered windows which reached from the ceiling to the floor. The spaces between the windows were filled in with mirrors exactly the same size as the windows, so that the whole room was walled in with windows and looking glasses. Through the three windows that looked to the north could be seen the far distant mountains Beautiful, as they were called, towering high above the surrounding country; sometimes their snow-covered tops were pink or creamy yellow as they caught the rays of the sunrise; sometimes they were dark purple or blue as they reflected the storm cloud. From the three windows that faced the south could be seen the great ocean, tossing and moving, constantly catching a thousand gleams of silver from the moonlight. Again and again, each little wave would be capped with white from its romp with the wind. Yet, as the huge mountains seemed to reach higher

than man could climb, so the vast ocean seemed to stretch out farther than any ship could possibly carry him. The eastern windows gave each morning a glorious vision of sky as the darkness of the night slowly melted into the still gray dawn, and that changed into a golden glow and that in turn became a tender pink. It was really the most beautiful as well as the most mysterious sight on earth if one watched it closely. The windows on the west looked out upon a great forest of tall fir trees and at the time of sunset the glorious colors of the sunset sky could be seen between the dark green branches.

But little Prince Harweda cared for none of these beautiful views. In fact, he scarcely glanced out of the windows at all, he was so taken up with the broad handsome mirrors, for in each of them he could see himself reflected and he was very fond of looking at himself in a looking glass. He was much pleased when he noticed that the mirrors were so arranged that each one not only reflected his whole body, head, arms, feet and all, but that it also reflected his image as seen in several of the other mirrors. He could thus see his front and back and each side, all at the same time. As he was a handsome boy he

enjoyed these many views of himself immensely, and would stand and sit and lie down just for the fun of seeing the many images of himself do the same thing.

He spent so much time looking at and admiring himself in the wonderful looking-glasses that he had very little time for the books and games which had been provided for his amusement. Hours were spent each day first before one mirror and then another, and he did not notice that the windows were growing narrower and the mirrors wider until the former had become so small that they hardly admitted light enough for him to see himself in the looking-glass. Still, this did not alarm him very much as he cared nothing whatever for the outside world. It only made him spend more time before the mirror, as it was now getting quite difficult for him to see himself at all. The windows at last became mere slits in the wall and the mirrors grew so large that they not only reflected little Harweda but all of the room besides in a dim, indistinct kind of a way.

Finally, however, Prince Harweda awoke one morning and found himself in total darkness. Not a ray of light came from the outside and of course, not an object in the room

could be seen. He rubbed his eyes and sat up to make sure that he was not dreaming. Then he called loudly for some one to come and open a window for him, but no one came. He got up and groped his way to the iron door and tried to open it, but it was, as you know, locked. He kicked it and beat upon it, but he only bruised his fists and hurt his toes. He grew quite angry now. How dare any one shut him, a prince, up in a dark prison like this! He abused his fairy god-mother, calling her all sorts of horrid names. Then he upbraided his father and mother, the King and Queen, for letting him go away with such a god-mother. In fact, he blamed everybody and everything but himself for his present condition, but it was of no use. The sound of his own voice was his only answer. The whole of the outside world seemed to have forgotten him.

As he felt his way back to his couch he knocked over one of the golden jars which had held the liquid perfume, but the perfume was all gone now and only an empty jar rolled over the floor. He laid himself down on the divan but its soft pillows had been removed and a hard iron frame-work received him. He was dismayed and lay for a long time thinking of

what he had best do with himself. All before him was blank darkness, as black as the darkest night you ever saw. He reached out his hand to get some fruit to eat, but only one or two withered apples remained on the table — was he to starve to death? Suddenly he noticed that the tinkling music of the fountain had ceased. He hastily groped his way over to it and he found in place of the dancing, running stream stood a silent pool of water. A hush had fallen upon everything about him, a dead silence was in the room. He threw himself down upon the floor and wished that he were dead also. He lay there for a long, long time.

At last he heard, or thought he heard, a faint sound. He listened eagerly. It seemed to be some tiny creature not far from him, trying to move about. For the first time for nearly a month he remembered the bird in its gilded cage. "Poor little thing," he cried as he sprang up, "You too are shut within this terrible prison. This thick darkness must be as hard for you to bear as it is for me." He went towards the cage and as he approached it the bird gave a sad little chirp.

"That's better than nothing," said the boy, "you must need some water to drink, poor

thing," continued he as he filled its drinking cup. "This is all I have to give you."

Just then he heard a harsh, grating sound, as of rusty bolts sliding with difficulty out of their sockets, and then faint rays of light not wider than a hair began to shine between the heavy plate mirrors. Prince Harweda was filled with joy. "Perhaps, perhaps," said he softly, "I may yet see the light again. Ah, how beautiful the outside world would look to me now!"

The next day he was so hungry that he began to eat one of the old withered apples, and as he bit it he thought of the bird, his fellow-prisoner. "You must be hungry, too, poor little thing," said he as he divided his miserable food and put part of it into the bird's cage. Again came the harsh, grating sound, and the boy noticed that the cracks of light were growing larger. Still they were only cracks, nothing of the outside world could be seen. Still it was a comfort not to have to grope about in total darkness. Prince Harweda felt quite sure that the cracks of light were a little wider, and on going up to one and putting his eye close to it as he would to a pinhole in a paper, he was rejoiced to find that he could tell the greenness

of the grass from the blue of the sky. "Ah, my pretty bird, my pretty bird!" he cried joyfully, "I have had a glimpse of the great beautiful outside world and you shall have it too."

With these words he climbed up into a chair and loosening the cage from the golden chain by which it hung, he carried it carefully to the nearest crack of light and placed it close to the narrow opening. Again was heard the harsh, grating sound and the walls moved a bit and the windows were now at least an inch wide. At this the poor Prince clasped his hands with delight. He sat himself down near the bird cage and gazed out of the narrow opening. Never before had the trees looked so tall and stately, or the white clouds floating through the sky so lovely. The next day as he was carefully cleaning the bird's cage so that the little creature might be somewhat more comfortable, the walls again creaked and groaned and the mirrors grew narrower by just so many inches as the windows widened. But Prince Harweda saw only the flood of sunshine that poured in, and the added beauty of the larger landscape. He cared nothing whatever now for the stupid mirrors which could only reflect what was

placed before them. Each day he found something new and beautiful in the view from the narrow windows. Now it was a squirrel frisking about and running up some tall tree trunk so rapidly that Prince Harweda could not follow it with his eyes; again it was a mother bird feeding her young. By this time the windows were a foot wide or more. One day as two white doves suddenly soared aloft in the blue sky the poor little canary who had now become the tenderly cared for comrade of the young Prince, gave a pitiful little trill. "Dear little fellow," cried Prince Harweda, "do you also long for your freedom? You shall at least be as free as I am." So saying, he opened the cage door and the bird flew out.

The Prince laughed as he watched it flutter about from chair to table and back to chair again. He was so much occupied with the bird that he did not notice that the walls had again shaken and the windows were now their full size, until the added light caused him to look around. He turned and saw the room looking almost exactly as it did the day he entered it with so much pride because it was all his own. Now it seemed close and stuffy and he would gladly have exchanged it for the humblest home in

his father's kingdom where he could meet people and hear them talk and see them smile at each other, even if they should take no notice of him. One day soon after this the little bird fluttered up against the window pane and beat his wings against it in a vain effort to get out. A new idea seized the young Prince, and taking up one of the golden jars he went to the window and struck on one of its checkered panes of glass with all his force. "You shall be free, even if I can not," said he to the bird. Two or three strong blows shivered the small pane and the bird swept out into the free open air beyond. "Ah, my pretty one, how glad I am that you are free at last," exclaimed the prince as he stood watching the flight of his fellow-prisoner. His face was bright with the glad, unselfish joy over the bird's liberty. The small, pink marble palace shook from top to bottom, the iron door flew open and the fresh wind from the sea rushed in and seemed to catch the boy in its invisible arms. Prince Harweda could hardly believe his eyes as he sprang to the door. There stood his fairy god-mother, smiling and with her hand reached out toward him. "Come, my god-child," said she gently, "we shall now go back to your father and mother, the King

and Queen, and they will rejoice with us that you have been cured of your terrible disease of selfishness."

Great indeed was the rejoicing in the palace when Prince Harweda was returned to them a sweet, loving boy, kind and thoughtful to all about him. Many a struggle he had with himself and many a conquest over the old habit of selfishness, but as time passed by he grew to be a great and wise king, loving and tenderly caring for all his people and loved by them in return.

THE LITTLE GRAY GRANDMOTHER;

OR,

THE ENCHANTED MIRROR.

Nobody knew whence she came or whither she went. All that any one of the children could have told you about her, was that oftentimes they looked up from their play and there she stood, in her soft misty gray gown, and still softer, long, gray cloak and shadowy gray veil which always reminded them of thin smoke. Sometimes her face could scarcely be seen behind this mysterious veil, and sometimes it shone quite clear and distinct. This was always the case when any one of them had done some unselfish or brave act and thought no one knew it. And yet, if happy with the thought, he or she chanced to look up, there would be the Little Gray Grandmother, her face fairly shining with the glad smile of approval. Then suddenly she would disappear and they would not hear of her for days and days.

There was a large family of them, and they

had sharp eyes too, but none of them ever saw her coming until, as I said before, there she stood in the midst of them. They lived near the great sea, and its mist often covered the coast for miles and miles so that nothing but the dim outline of objects could be seen. Therefore, their city cousins had fallen into the way of laughing at them and saying the Little Gray Grandmother was only a bit of the sea fog left behind after a damp day, but *they* knew better.

Although she had never spoken to them, had she not smiled at them, and sometimes looked sad when she came upon them suddenly and found any one of them doing a mean or greedy deed, and ah, how stern her eyes were the day she found Wilhelm telling a lie! Nobody could make *them* believe that she was only a dream which came from a bit of sea fog! Then, too, had she not left that thimble for Mai which was no sooner placed on her thimble-finger than it began to push the needle so fast that a seam a yard long would be finished before you could say, "Jack Robinson," unless you had practiced saying it very often.

Who else was it that brought those tall leather boots for Gregory which helped him

to run so fast when sent on an errand that even his dog, Oyster, could not keep up with him? And as for Lelia, everybody knew that it was just after the Little Gray Grandmother had paid them a visit Lelia had found herself holding that bottle of Attic salt from far-away Greece, two grains of which placed on the end of her tongue, caused good humor and wit to flow with every word she said until she was equal to a bit of sunshine on a dark day.

All of them were as certain as certain could be that she had presented Doodle when he was a very little child with those soft, warm mittens which somehow grew as he grew and so always just fitted his hands. What wonderful mittens they were, too! All Doodle had to do on the coldest day was to reach out his hand in his hearty, cheery way, to any one, and no matter how cold that person might be, even if his teeth were chattering with the cold, he was sure to feel a warm glow all over his body. This was how Doodle got into the way of taking care of all the lame dogs and sick cats that came along; and why all the old people liked him. They said he made them feel young again. And Tom and Wilhelm and the rest of them, had not the Little Gray Grandmother left a gift for each of them?

Ah, but they were a happy family! What if they did have to eat herring and dry bread all the year round, with potatoes now and then thrown in, and had to live in a hut, didn't they have a Little Gray Grandmother, when so many city children, who thought themselves fine because they lived in big houses, had never even heard of her!

Now, you can understand why all the children were gathered together eagerly looking at something which lay on the sand before them. The Little Gray Grandmother had been there and had left something. What *was* it? They could not tell. It glittered like the surface of a pool of water when it is quite still and the sun shines down upon it, and they could see their faces reflected on it just as they had often seen them in the well back of the house, only this mirrored their faces much more clearly than the well did. *What was it?* For whom had the Little Gray Grandmother intended it? These were the questions they could not answer. So they decided to take it in to the dear-mother and have her explain it to them.

Ah, the dear-mother, she must know, she knew almost everything and what she didn't know she always tried to find out for them.

That was the finest thing about the dear-mother. Of course she cooked their food for them, and made their clothes, and nursed any of them when they were ill, and all such things, but the great thing about her was that she never seemed too busy to look at what they brought her and was always ready to answer their questions. Therefore they with one accord decided to take this new gift into the house and ask the dear-mother about it.

Of course she admired it; she always admired everything they brought her, if it was only a star-fish or a new kind of sea-weed. She said it was made of some sort of precious metal, and that it seemed to be a mirror such as they used in olden times before looking-glasses had been invented. "Perhaps," she added, "it has been washed up from the sea." But the children cried, "Oh, no, the Little Gray Grandmother left it." They were very, very sure of that. But for whom had it been left? Even the dear-mother could not settle this question.

At last it was decided that it should be hung on the cottage wall that all might use it; so there it hung for many a year, and ah, such strange things as the children saw reflected in it! It was not at all like an ordinary mirror,

not in the least like anything you ever saw, and yet, perchance you may have seen something like it. How do I know?

Well, at any rate the children had never heard of such a wonderful mirror before. It had a queer way of swinging itself on its hinge — I forgot to tell you that it had been fastened to the wall by a hinge so that its face could be turned toward the east or the west window, and thus let the children see themselves in the morning as well as the evening light. At first they thought this was a fine idea, but sometimes it was not exactly comfortable to have the small mirror suddenly swing round and face them when they didn't care to be faced.

For instance, when Mai had been working hard all day and because she felt tired, spoke crossly to the little brothers, it was not at all agreeable to look up and see the face of a bear reflected in the silver mirror, or when Gregory had been boasting of something fine he was going to accomplish, to catch a glimpse of a barnyard rooster strutting about as if he were indeed the master of the farm. Somehow it made Gregory feel foolish even if the rest of the children did not see the image in the mirror. Once little Beta came in ahead of the

others, and, finding some apples that the father had brought home, seized the largest one and began to devour it. A swing of the silver mirror brought its polished surface before her eyes, and instead of a reflection of her own chubby face, she saw a pig greedily devouring a pile of apples. She couldn't understand it, and yet it made her feel ashamed and she quietly laid the apple back on the table.

But the pictures were not all disagreeable ones. Sometimes the small silver mirror reflected *beautiful* pictures. One bright summer day when Mai had stayed indoors all the morning to help the dear-mother finish a jacket for Beta, when she was longing with all her heart to be out in the sunshine, she chanced to glance up at the small mirror, and there was the vision of a beautiful Saint, with a golden light around her head such as Mai had seen in a church window once when she was in the city. The smile on the face was radiant. In a moment the vision had disappeared and only the shining surface of silver remained.

One day Gregory rowed little Beta across the bay to the large town on the other side, and did without his dinner that with his little farthing he might pay for the privilege of letting her climb the light-house stairs and see

how big the world was. That night when they reached home, tired and happy, Beta looked into the mirror and there she saw the good St. Christopher wading through a dark stream of water with the little Christ-child on his shoulder, and somehow the face of St. Christopher was Gregory's face. As she cried, "Look!" she pointed to the mirror, but Gregory could see nothing but its shining surface. Still, Beta ever afterwards called him "St. Christopher," little dreaming that in years to come he would truly be the means by which many little children were carried safely across the dark streams.

At another time Doodle had rescued a poor frightened cat from some boys on the beach who were tormenting her, and even though they jeered at him and called him "chicken-hearted" he had taken the little creature up in his arms and brought her in to the dear mother. As he passed the small silver mirror, a picture of a young knight shone in the depths of its surface, with a face so strong and pure and brave that Doodle stopped to admire it and wonder how it came there. Again and again when the children did a kind, or a truthful, or loving thing, the mirror reflected for a moment some beautiful

image which instantly disappeared if it were spoken of. Somehow it constantly reminded them of the glad look in the eyes of the Little Gray Grandmother when she found them playing peacefully and happily together. And strange to say, the Little Gray Grandmother never came again after the small silver mirror had been hung on the wall. Probably she thought they did not need her any longer.

Many years passed by and the children were all grown, when the dear-mother was called to pass on to her heavenly home. As they gathered around her death bed she asked them to hand her the small silver mirror which still hung on the home wall. She took it and broke it into pieces, giving a piece to each of of the eight children, and each piece immediately became a full-sized mirror as large as the first one had been. These she told them to keep always with them, and then with a gentle smile she passed away. As they separated to go out into the world, each one took his or her small silver mirror and hung it in his or her private bed room, that each might look into it and know, for certain, whether that day had been spent for the cause of the right or the wrong.

LITTLE BLESSED-EYES;

OR,

THE FAIRY'S BIRTHDAY GIFT.

In the olden times when fairies could be seen by mortals, they often took upon themselves the office of sponsors, god-fathers and god-mothers, to new-born children. In such cases, the child adopted was sure, sooner or later, to receive some wonderful gift from his fairy god-mother.

One bright, Spring morning, a sweet boy baby came into a humble home, made ready for him by love. As his mother looked fondly upon the wee form at her side she thought, naturally enough, of his future, and wondered what kind of a man he would become. "How I wish," said she softly, "that I could give to you, my darling child, the richest gift on earth, so that Kings and Emperors might be proud to call you their companion." "So you can," said a gentle voice beside her. The mother was startled by the words, for she thought herself alone when she uttered the

wish. She looked to the right, then to the left, — nobody had entered the room. "Ah, silly woman that I am," sighed she. "I have let my own thoughts answer me." Again she looked down at her babe.

"I can give him the greatest and most wonderful gift on earth," said the same gentle voice. This time the mother was quite sure that some one had spoken, though the voice was unlike any human voice she had ever heard. It was so soft and musical that it sounded like the tinkling of silver bells. The poor woman was quite frightened and drew her babe closer to her side as she peered into the shadowy corners of the room.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the silvery voice, "Are you afraid of me!" Following the sound this time, the mother's eyes fell upon a tiny creature no larger than your thumb who sat perched upon a post of the bed. The body of this strange, little being was as perfect as that of any child. From its two shoulders extended two wings as thin as gauze, but gleaming with every tint of the rainbow. Upon its head was a slender gold crown, and its small face just at this moment was bright with a merry smile.

The mother knew instantly that it was one of

the good fairies who were reported to be present at the birth of every babe, and who, if seen and recognized, were sure to bring some good fortune to the child, but if unnoticed, went away sorrowing, because they were then powerless to help the infant.

"What will you do for my child?" cried the mother. "Will you give him comfort and ease and fill his days with pleasure?"

"Ah no," replied the fairy, "I will give him something *far better* than pleasant food and a soft bed and fine clothes!"

"Will you make him great and powerful so that men may bow down before him?" said the mother eagerly.

"No! no!" again replied the fairy shaking her head. "I will give him something of far more worth than fame and power!"

"You will make him rich, so rich that he will never have to work?" exclaimed the mother.

"Nay, good woman," said the fairy seriously. "These are but foolish things for which you ask. My gift is greater than all of these put together. Pleasure and influence and wealth a man may earn for himself — and he may be very miserable after he gets them, too," added she, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"The gift that I would bestow upon your son will make him the happiest of mortals and will give him the power of making many, many others happy!"

"Tell me," cried the mother, "how will you make him so happy? No human being is ever sure of happiness."

"Let me kiss him upon his two eyelids as he lies there asleep," replied the fairy, "and do you the same each returning birthday and all will be well."

The mother hesitated; a step was heard approaching the door.

"Quick, quick!" exclaimed the fairy. "I must be off before that door opens, as it is forbidden us ever to be seen by more than one mortal at a time. Shall I give him the magic kiss or not?"

"Yes!" cried the excited mother, "I trust you will do no harm to my precious child."

Instantly the fairy fluttered down from the post of the bed, and impressing a kiss upon each of the closed eyelids of the child, she said, softly, "He shall be called 'Blessed-Eyes.'"

The door of the room swung back upon its hinges, the father of the child entered with a cheery "Good morning" to wife and babe,

the fairy was gone.—The mother silently pondered over what had happened and when the christening day came, she said his name was to be "Blessed-Eyes."

Most of her friends and relatives thought this was a very queer name indeed to give to a child, and even went so far as to argue with the father that the little one ought to be named "John" or "James" after one or the other of his two grandfathers. But as the boy grew into a sweet, healthy childhood, loving and kind to everyone, they were gradually reconciled to the name, and little Blessed-Eyes became a general favorite. He was always sunshiny, always happy. His mother never failed on each new birthday to rise early, even before the day dawned, and to go to his bedside, and, bending over him, kiss his two eyelids as the fairly had bidden. At such times she imagined that she heard a faint sound as of a far away chorus of strange, silvery voices, singing:

> "Love well, love well, love well,
> That the heart within may swell,
> Love well, love well, love well!"

Still, she was never quite sure but that it was merely the first mellow tones of the church bell in a distant village.

Long before her child could talk the mother noticed how closely he observed everything about him, and how quickly he responded to the faintest smile upon her face. As he grew older it was a delight to take him out for a walk. He was constantly discovering some new beauty in the landscape. He saw the first red glow of the evening sunset. His eyes were the first to spy out the early spring flower, even before the snow was off the ground. In the late autumn when the wind was sharp and cold and the woods were bare, he was sure to bring home some red mountain berries, or some withered leaf into a corner of which a cunning little caterpillar had wrapped himself, sewing it over and over as one would sew a bag. Then he would tell gleefully how the frost had touched the ponds and changed them into smooth glass. Often on a cold winter morning he would waken his mother by clapping his hands with joy over the frost-pictures on the window pane. Sometimes in the evening twilight he would ask his mother if the stars were pinholes in the floor of heaven through which the glory shone. No stone nor cloud nor stream nor tree but gave him pleasure.

"Ah," thought the mother, "this is the

fairy's birthday gift. She has made his eyes to see the beautiful everywhere." "More than that, far more than that! Kings and princes shall yet call him great!" was whispered gently in her ear. The mother was amazed. Who could have heard her unuttered thoughts? She looked up, but she only saw a robin hopping about in a branch of the tree overhead. Still she seemed to hear again the soft but distant singing of the words,

"Love well, love well, love well,
That the heart within may swell,
Love well, love well, love well."

"Surely," said she, half aloud, "who could help loving the child. He has indeed, blessed eyes."

As the boy grew older he seemed somehow to know the people about him as nobody else knew them. He was always finding out the best that was in each of them. Somehow he had a way of helping all the other lads out of their difficulties. For instance, early one morning when he chanced to be passing the old basket maker's, he heard the shop boy speaking in loud, angry tones to the baskets, abusing them for being so contrary and ill-shaped. Blessed-Eyes paused, and looking

through the open door he saw the poor apprentice struggling to fit a round cover on to a square basket and a square cover on to a round basket.

"Let me help you," said Blessed-Eyes cheerily, "I think you have made a mistake, that's all. This cover was intended for that basket, and that cover for this basket." With these words he put the round cover on to the round basket, and the square cover on to the square basket, and each fitted snugly into its place.

"How clever you are, Blessed-Eyes" said the apprentice, "I have been working over these baskets for the last half hour." Without more ado he put them upon his shoulder, and started on his errand, which was to deliver them to the gardener at the King's palace.

Years passed by, changing little Blessed-Eyes into a tall young man, and each succeeding year added to the wonderful power which his eyes possessed, of seeing the best that was in everything and everybody. He was the friend of rich and poor. All sought his companionship, for he was constantly pointing out to them so many beautiful things in the world about them which they would never have seen but for him. All loved him dearly, for he

was just as constantly finding the best that their inner world contained, and encouraging them to live according to their noblest ideals of how true men and women should live. So, you see, the fairy's Birthday Gift was indeed a great, and wonderful Gift.

THE FAIR WHITE CITY;

OR,

A STORY OF THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

Many of you will remember the story I told you of Little Blessed-Eyes and the wonderful power his fairy god-mother gave him of seeing instantly the best that was in everybody. To-day I want to tell you of some of the remarkable things which happened after Blessed-Eyes had become chief counsellor to the King, for, of course, the King was glad to keep near him a man with such power as that.

Long years have passed since our last story and Blessed-Eyes had been the King's Chief Counsellor for ten years, or more, and the capital had become the most renowned city on earth. One day Blessed-Eyes was walking through its streets when he heard a deep sigh as of some one in great trouble. He turned, and looking around saw a poor laboring man with his head bent forward upon his hands, as he sat on the doorstep of a house near by.

"What is the matter?" said Blessed-Eyes gently, stopping in front of the man.

"Ah," replied the poor man, "I can find nothing to do in this great city. All the places in the shops and stores are already taken and my children are starving for want of bread."

"What large, strong arms you have!" said Blessed-Eyes.

"Yes," replied the man, "but of what use are they to me. One can measure tape or weigh sugar with much smaller arms than mine."

"Why do you not seek the King?" continued Blessed-Eyes, "and offer to go to yonder mountain range and quarry the beautiful white marble which lies there. I have heard that it is the most beautiful marble in the whole world. Those great strong arms of yours could do a grand work in the King's quarry."

The man's face softened at once. "I will go," he said.

The King gladly accepted the strong man's offer and the next day started him out with crow-bars and drills to the mountain district, and soon there came a wagon load of beautiful white marble, and then another and then an-

other. The King was so pleased with the marble that he sent ten men to help the strong man in his work, and then twenty and then a hundred, until the mountain tops rang with the sturdy blows of the quarrymen. And soon a vast pile of the glistening, white marble had been collected in the King's stoneyard, and the poor and discouraged man with the strong arms had become the most famous stonemason in the world.

Not long after this, Blessed-Eyes and the King walked one fine evening to look at the shining white marble and to plan how best it could be used to make beautiful the city. As they reached the tall white pile, they noticed a man standing beside it, evidently measuring it carefully with his eye.

"It is a fine sight," said Blessed-Eyes, "is it not?"

The man turned and looked sadly at him for a moment, then taking a tablet from his pocket he wrote on it: "I cannot hear a word that you say; I am totally deaf, and therefore I am the loneliest man in all the King's realm."

Blessed-Eyes' heart was stirred with pity for the lonely man. He took the pencil and wrote on the tablet: "You evidently have a very correct eye for measurements."

"Yes," replied the man, as soon as he had read these words, "I can tell the difference of a hair's breath in the height of any two lines, and I think I could estimate the weight of any one of these great stones within half an ounce."

At this Blessed-Eyes seized the tablet and wrote rapidly on it these words: "You have such good eyes for measurements and weights you would surely be a good builder. This is the King. Why do you not offer to make for him some beautiful buildings out of this white marble?"

The lonely man's face brightened; he turned to the King. A short consultation showed the King that he had found a treasure, and the new architect was set to work at once drawing plans for several buildings which were to surround a charming lake that was in the King's park.

In a few months the quiet park became the scene of busy activity. Scores of men were laying foundations; others were hewing the white marble into shapely blocks; others were polishing portions of it into tall and shining white pillars, and others still, were carving beautiful capitals for the same. All were working under the direction of the new architect whose wonderful designs had so inspired

the King that he decided to build the grandest and handsomest group of buildings which the nations of the earth had ever seen. When all was done and the buildings stood in their full majestic beauty with their long colonnades shining in the sunlight and their graceful towers rising airily in the upper air and their beautiful gilded domes crowning all, the scene resembled fairyland. The people could hardly believe their eyes as they wandered through the place. They came from the farthest ends of the earth to enjoy its beauty, for the sad and lonely deaf man had now become the most famous architect in the whole world, and was surrounded by friends and admirers, who rejoiced in his power to create such bewildering scenes of beauty. His face lost its sad expression and each time that he met Blessed-Eyes there came a joyful smile upon it.

Handsome and attractive as were the outsides of these buildings, within they were cold and bare, and Blessed-Eyes and the King often consulted as to how the inner walls might be made as beautiful as were the outer ones. It chanced one day that as Blessed-Eyes was walking alone through the "Court of Honor," (this was the name now given to that part of the lake which was surrounded by

the white marble buildings), he observed a group of boys and young men, evidently having great sport with some object in their midst. When he came near he saw it was an embarrassed and harassed looking stranger whom they were tormenting.

With a feeling of indignation he pressed forward into their midst.

"What is your difficulty, sir?" he said quietly and respectfully.

The stranger blushed and faltered, then he stammeringly said:—

"I-I-I ca-ca-canno-no-not sp-speak your language wi-wi-withou-ou-out st--st-stammering."

At this the men roared with laughter. Again Blessed-Eyes turned an angry look upon them, and quietly slipping his arm through the stranger's he said: "Will you walk with me? I have something to say to you." And the two walked off together, leaving the crowd rather abashed and ashamed of its rudeness. When they had gone some distance in silence, Blessed-Eyes said: "As soon as I saw you I noticed you had strong, shapely and artistic hands. Surely you must be able to draw and paint." The stranger's face lighted up with a radiant smile.

"How very odd," he stammered, "th-th-that you should see I was an artist, I had hoped to get work here."

Blessed-Eyes took him at once to the King, and soon the three were deep in plans for decorating and making beautiful the inner walls of the wonderful white buildings which surrounded the "Court of Honor." It was not long before the stammering stranger had proved that he was not only an artist but a master artist. Lesser artists and new pupils flocked to him from all parts of the land and soon the interior of the handsome buildings presented scenes as busy as the outside had before shown. In less than a year the walls of all the buildings had been decorated in soft, beautiful colors, and on many of them were wonderful pictures of far-away landscapes; of beautiful sunset clouds; of fair, floating angel forms, and, best of all, true and lifelike portraits of the noblest men and women of the nation. Long before this was accomplished the stammering stranger had become recognized as the greatest artist of the age.

The next question which arose in the mind of the King and his ever faithful counsellor, Blessed-Eyes, was as to the best way to use

the now truly magnificent buildings, so that all the people might enjoy them. While still full of these thoughts, Blessed-Eyes one day noticed a man wearily pacing up and down the court with bowed head, and hands clasped behind his body. On coming nearer Blessed-Eyes saw that he was blind. At the sound of his approaching footsteps the man stopped and said:—

"Ah! that is the step of Blessed-Eyes! Much as he has been able to help his fellow men, there is nothing that he can do for me!"

"Indeed," said Blessed-Eyes, cheerily, "I am not so sure of that. If you can tell a man by his step you must certainly have very good hearing."

"Ah!" said the man, "I can hear a leaf fall to the ground a block away."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Blessed-Eyes gladly, "You are just the man for whom I have been looking. Surely a man whose hearing is so acute must be a good musician."

"Yes, yes!" said the man impatiently, "I am the finest conductor of an orchestra in the whole world, but that avails me but little in these days. Nobody cares for good music now!" With these words he shrugged his shoulders and was about to pass on.

"Come with me to the King," cried Blessed-Eyes, "I think he has need of you."

After a long talk with the King, and some experiments by which they tested the man's fine sense of hearing, the King felt quite sure that he was exactly the man needed as leader for the great orchestra which he generously supported that the people might learn to love good music, so he was at once put in charge of the same. The new musician proved to be such a wonderful leader that no man in the whole orchestra dared play a false note, and soon their music under this remarkable director, was famed throughout the land, until thousands upon thousands came to hear the afternoon concerts which were given each day in the largest of the beautiful, white marble buildings.

One bright, spring morning Blessed-Eyes started out to enjoy the sunshine and the perfume of the flowers and the glad song of the birds. "Ah," thought he, as he walked along, drinking in great draughts of the fine, fresh air, "no human being can possibly be sad on such a morning as this." But while he was yet speaking, his eyes fell upon the tear-stained face of a woman. As it was impossible for Blessed-Eyes to pass any one who was

in trouble, he stopped and said gently, "Dear Madam, is there anything I can do for you?"

"Alas, alas!" said the poor woman, "What can you, or anyone else, do for a broken-hearted mother whose four little children have been taken by death from her arms. Unless I have children to love, life has no brightness for me."

"Surely," said Blessed-Eyes softly and compassionately, "there are yet many children who need your love. Will you not come with me to the palace of the King?"

The woman looked puzzled and perplexed, but so sweet and gentle had been the tone of his voice that she instinctively followed him. I do not know just what happened in the consultation with the King, but this I do know, that only a few days elapsed before the "Court of Honor" rang each day with the voices of happy children as they followed the no longer sad-faced woman around to the concert hall to hear the sweet music, or off to the buildings whose walls were covered with beautiful pictures, or back again to their own handsome building, set apart for their particular use by the King.

Here she told them stories and taught them songs and led them in charming games and

plays, and trained their little hands into skillful work until throughout the kingdom there was no happier band of children than those who had once been the waifs of the city, wandering through its streets. So full of motherly love was the woman's work with her new children that other beautiful and noble women came, in time, and joined her in it, until at last there was no child in the whole city who had not learned how to use his hands skillfully, how to love sweet music, how to enjoy beautiful pictures and how to be kind and thoughtful towards others.

In time many of these children grew into manhood and womanhood and became musicians, artists, authors, physicians, clergymen, and wonderfully skilled workmen of all sorts. Many of the women married and became loving and wise mothers because of the training they had received from the pale-faced, childless woman in the King's "Court of Honor."

At last the good King died, and the question arose, "Who shall be our next King." The counsellors of the nation met together to decide the matter. They sent to the stonemasons far away in the back country and the great master-mason cried, "Let Blessed-Eyes be our King! Did he not teach me how to

use my strong arms? Has he not furnished bread for us and our families?" And the hundreds of stone-cutters and miners and diggers round about shouted aloud, "Long live King Blessed-Eyes!"

Then they sent to the various villages and towns of the Kingdom and the architects said "Let Blessed-Eyes be King! Has he not created the great Court of Honor from which we have all learned to make beautiful whatever we build!" And the carpenters and joiners and plasterers and painters all cried out, "Long live King Blessed-Eyes!"

Then they sent to the mills and the factories of the great cities and the masterworkmen and designers answered and said, "Why not make Blessed-Eyes our King? It was he who first introduced Art into our land and showed us how to make as beautiful as pictures our carpets and curtains and walls. Have not these things made our merchandise sought for all over the world." Then the spinners and weavers and dyers all shouted aloud, "Long live King Blessed-Eyes!"

Then they sent to all the colleges and schools in the land and the grave presidents and superintendents said, "We know of no better man than Blessed-Eyes. He first taught us that a

love of the beautiful should be part of each child's education." Then the youths and the maidens, the boys and the girls, and even the little children shouted until they were hoarse, "Long live King Blessed-Eyes!"

Then the whole nation seemed to cry out, "Blessed-Eyes, Blessed-Eyes, Long live King Blessed-Eyes!" There is none among us whom he has not helped. When the news was brought to Blessed-Eyes that all the people desired him to rule over them, he smiled gently and said, "I had hoped to rest now, but if I can serve my country I must do it." So he was made King and the nation became wise and great and powerful under his reign. For the little children grew up learning to love the beautiful and to see it everywhere until at last there was a whole nation of blessed-eyes, and every city in the land became as beautiful as was the White City by the Lake.

THE LOVING CUP WHICH WAS MADE OF IRON.

Upon the edge of a great forest a woodcutter had built him a cottage, and soon he brought a fair young bride to live in it. She was a neat, trim, little body, who wasted nothing and kept everything in the house in perfect order, so that in a short time their small yard showed her care also.

One day some cousins came from town to see the woodcutter, and his wife. They brought with them their dinner in a large basket, and a jolly time they had of it, wandering through the woods, lying on the soft green grass, and gathering the wild flowers. Finally, hunger drove them back to the woodcutter's house, and as they sat on the porch eating their luncheon, they thoughtlessly threw the skins of their oranges and the banana peelings on the grass in front of them. The woodcutter's wife said nothing, but she felt sure that such litter and dirt on the fresh green grass would grieve the wood-fairies who were trying to keep the forest and all of its sur-

roundings as beautiful as possible. Therefore when the guests had gone, she quietly picked up all the skins and scraps of paper and burned them.

This so pleased the wood-fairies, that when her first boy baby came, they sent him a *loving-cup* of gold. Around it were circles of diamonds and pearls and deep red rubies. Of course, the young mother was very happy, for she knew that such a gift meant her son would some day possess much money. So she set herself to work to make her yard more beautiful than it had been before, by planting flower-seeds in a border by the fence. "If my son is to become a rich man," said she to herself, "he must learn to love what is beautiful, that he may use his money wisely." She did not stop when she had made her own yard beautiful, but soon began scattering more flower-seed down by the spring that the wood-fairies might have flowers to enjoy while they came to drink. Before long her kind heart led her to plant other flowers by the dusty road-side and down in the lonely valley, in order that weary travelers, as they journeyed along, might see the bright blossoms and smell the sweet perfume.

This pleased the wood-fairies even more

than her thoughtful tidiness had done, so, when her second boy baby came, they sent him a *loving-cup* of pure silver. Around the outside of it were carved pictures of youths and maidens dancing in a circle on the green grass. This gift made the mother even happier than the first had done, for she read in the carving on the cup that her boy would love the open air and would grow up strong and healthy and her heart grew tender to all things about her.

She had noticed that some of the ugliest and most neglected weeds often bore delicate flowers, which, however, soon faded for lack of care. "I will see," said she, "if I cannot make the weeds grow into flowers by watering them and pruning them and lovingly caring for them. In this way I can help to make the whole forest wholesome, and thus show the wood-fairies that I am grateful to them for their gift of health to my second son."

She began by caring for the weeds which stood nearest her own home, and was rewarded by seeing them slowly change into shapely plants and their blossoms become strong and beautiful. Then her care extended to the weeds along the wayside, and in a short time there was not a hurtful weed to be

found in the neighborhood. All had been changed, by a little patient care, into strong, thrifty shrubs and plants, each blooming according to its own nature, but all gladdening the sight by their bright flowers and healthy green leaves.

This changing of weeds into flowers so surprised and delighted the wood-fairies who had never heard of such a thing, that when her third boy-baby came, they consulted among themselves and decided to send him the *best gift* they had to bestow. Accordingly they sent to the new baby a *loving-cup* made of strong, black iron, and with it, three large earthen jars. One was filled with the sweetest golden nectar ever tasted by mortal lips, another contained a brown vinegar so sour that half a teaspoonful of it would make your face wrinkle, while the third jar held a blackish-looking gall, of such a bitter flavor that one drop of it would make one shrink from ever wanting to taste it again. With this strange present they sent word that if the mother loved her boy, whom by the way she had named Philip, she would mix a cupful of the sweet nectar, the sour vinegar and the bitter gall, using half as much vinegar as she did nectar, and half as much gall as vinegar,

and give it to the boy to drink on his birthday, each year, until he was twenty-one years old.

The mother hesitated. It seemed so hard to make her darling child taste of the bitter gall when there was plenty of the sweet nectar to last until he was grown, but she knew that the wood-fairies were wise. Were they not trying to make the whole earth beautiful? Surely they would not require so hard a thing of her unless it was for little Philip's welfare.

Therefore, each succeeding birthday she mixed the fairies' drink and poured it into the iron cup and gave it to the child. Sometimes he cried and sometimes he fretted, but she held the cup firmly to his lips until the last drop was drained, and then she would kiss him and tell him that he was her dear, brave boy, and would some day thank her for making him drink the fairies' potion. He soon found that if he drank the contents of the loving-cup early in the morning, he tasted nothing but the sweet nectar, whereas if he put it off until noon, he could not taste anything but the sour vinegar, and when he delayed the drinking of it until night, it seemed as if the whole contents of the cup had changed to gall, and he would be days

and days getting over the bitter taste. So being a sensible boy, he learned to drink it as soon as it was mixed.

Each year he grew more loving and thoughtful of others, more like the wood-fairies in his effort to make the world around him beautiful. Little by little he gained the power which the wood-fairies alone can give — the wonderful power of knowing just what is going on in the hearts of the people about you, even when you do not speak to them or they to you.

If he chanced to meet a sad-faced man or woman on the street, his beautiful eyes seemed to say more tenderly than words could say, "I see you are in trouble and I feel *so sorry* for you." If he passed a group of merry makers, his smile was so bright that they knew it meant "What a lot of fun you are having! I am so glad!" As he grew older his hands became almost as wonderful as his eyes, or his smile. If he found a little child crying over a broken toy he would stop and mend it, and in a few moments the tears would be gone and the little one would go off laughing or singing, hugging his mended toy.

Sometimes a young girl would come to him with a beautiful picture which she had been embroidering on a screen, but which had been

spoiled by some crooked, careless stitches, and he would patiently sit down beside her and would point out to her just where the wrong stitches had been put into the picture, and would help her take them out. Then he would show her how to put in the right kind of stitches and she would go away happy and contented, ready to work day by day on the lovely screen with which she was someday going to make her future home beautiful.

Now and then a young musician would find that his silver flute played only harsh discords instead of sweet melodies and he would grow discouraged and be ready to throw it away, when Philip would come along and pick up the flute quietly and examine it and discover that the jarring sounds came because it was not free from the dust and dirt of the street. Then he would tell the young player what was the matter and would stay with him until he had made the flute as clean as a flute should be, and he was usually rewarded by some fine music from the grateful musician. Occasionally he would come across a man toiling along the road with a pack on his back, so heavy that he was bent nearly double by it. Then Philip would stop him and plan with him how the load could be divided into two packs so that he might carry

one under each arm, and thus be able to walk straight and erect and hold his head up as a man should. Nobody ever dreamed of telling him a lie! "He knows just how we feel" people used to say, and somehow the sight of his strong, manly face stirred within them a desire to be brave and noble, and true, and he was beloved by all who knew him.

This indeed was the most precious gift which the wood-fairies could give.

HANS AND THE FOUR BIG GIANTS.

Once upon a time there lived a little boy whose name was Hans. His home was in a village where the tall trees shaded the green grass that grew around the houses. Hans loved his home very much. He loved to hear the birds sing and to watch them fly high in the air, and he often threw crumbs upon the ground for them to eat. He loved the bright red and blue and yellow flowers which grew in the garden behind the house. He delighted in the sweet odors which came all unseen from their very hearts. So he gladly watered them when they looked thirsty. His mother soon taught him how to place strong straight sticks beside the weak vines so that they, too, could climb up and get the sunlight. Hans loved the dear old hens and their downy little chickens that were not afraid to peck the grain out of his hand. In fact, Hans loved everything and everybody about him, from the small naked worms which crawled about among the clods of earth, up to the strange and

beautiful stars which shone so high above his head.

He was a very happy, little fellow, always busy, always finding something to do for somebody.

By and by, when he grew to be a tall, strong lad, he used to go with his father to the forest to chop wood and thus help earn money which went to buy food and clothes for his mother and his three younger brothers, for Hans' father was poor and money was scarce in his family.

After a time, when Hans had grown so tall that you and I would call him a young man, his father said to him: "Hans, my boy, it is time now that you started out to hunt some work for yourself. Your next younger brother can help me with the wood chopping and the smaller ones can help the mother in the work about the house. You must go out into the world and learn how to take care of yourself, and perhaps some day you may have to take care of your mother and me when we grow too old to work."

So Hans' mother packed his clothes in a little bundle, and, as she kissed him good-bye, she said: "Hans, my precious son, always be brave and true, and the good God will take

care of you." Hans then bade farewell to his father and his younger brothers and started on his journey.

He walked a long way until by and by he came to a great city, where the houses looked dingy with smoke and the rattle of the carts and wagons made an incessant roar. After a time he found some work in the shop of a blacksmith, and although the work was grimy and rather hard to do Hans used to like to see the sparks fly from the red hot iron every time he struck a blow with his heavy hammer. He was very proud when at last he could shape the hard iron into a fine horseshoe almost as well as the smith himself. Hans did not know it, but this very work was making his arms grow big and strong and his chest broad and full.

Every day Hans used to see a beautiful princess drive past the blacksmith's shop. She was the most beautiful princess in the world, and although her blue eyes and golden hair were admired by everyone, she was chiefly beloved because of her sweet smile. Hans used often to say to himself: "How I wish I could serve this lovely young princess." At last one day he went to the palace gate and asked the gatekeeper if there was not some work in the palace which he could do.

"What can you do?" asked the gatekeeper.

"I am willing to do any kind of work which the king may need to have done," answered Hans.

Then the gatekeeper passed him on to the keeper of the king's palace.

"What can you do?" again asked the keeper of the king's palace.

"I am willing to do any kind of work which the king may need to have done," replied Hans.

So the keeper of the palace told the king that there was a strong, tall young man without who wanted to serve him. "Bring him to me," said the king. When Hans came into the presence of the mighty king the monarch looked at him very hard for a few moments and then said: "What can you do, young man?" And again Hans replied: "I am willing to do anything that you may need to have done. I would like to serve the beautiful princess."

"You would, would you?" cried the king. "Now I will test you. In the bottom of the North Sea there lies a string of enchanted pearls. If you will get those pearls and bring them to me you shall serve my daughter, the

princess, and in time I may make you governor over one of my provinces; who knows?" And the king laughed to himself.

Hans was wild with delight and, turning, hastened out of the palace. The very next day he started on his journey to the North Sea. He walked and walked a long way until he was very tired. At length, just ahead of him, he saw a big giant rushing along in the strangest fashion.

"Good morning" said Hans, as he caught up with the giant. "What a very large giant you are!"

"Yes," replied the giant, looking down at Hans, "I have need to be both large and strong. Where are you going, young man?"

"I am going," answered Hans, "to the North Sea to try to get a string of enchanted pearls which lies at the bottom of the sea."

"Ah!" said the tall giant, "it will take you a long time to get there. Now if you could walk as fast as I can, it would be an easy matter."

"How fast can you walk?" asked Hans.

"I can walk faster than a greyhound can run," said the giant, "and when I run, the swift river cannot keep pace with me."

"Can you, indeed?" exclaimed Hans.

"What a fine fellow you are! I wish you would come along with me. After I find the string of pearls I want to get back to the king's palace as soon as possible, for I am to serve the beautiful princess."

"If that's the case," said the giant, "I think I will go along with you."

The two walked along, chatting together, until they saw what Hans thought must be a huge round stone lying in the road. When, however, they came up to it, he saw that it was another big giant lying asleep by the road side. The hot sun was pouring down upon his face. "Stay here," said Hans, "until I can cut a branch from some tree to shade that poor fellow's face. The sun is so hot it will soon blister him."

At these words the tall giant laughed aloud. "Ho, ho!" he cried, "don't you know who that is? He is a neighbor of mine. He has such strong eyes that he can see a fly on a leaf of a tree a mile away."

The loud laugh of the tall giant awoke the sleeping giant, and he opened his great eyes and stared at Hans. "What are you doing, young man?" growled he.

"Oh, nothing," said Hans. "I was merely sticking these branches into the ground so

that they might keep the sun out of your eyes."

"Bah!" cried the great giant, sitting up, "did you not know that my eyes were so strong that I could look the noonday sun straight in the face?"

"Indeed! Indeed!" said Hans. "What a wonderful giant you must be. I wish you would come with me. I may need your strong eyes, for I am on my way to the North Sea to search for an enchanted necklace of pearls which lies at the bottom of the sea."

"Oh ho!" said the giant, "if that's the case I think I will go with you."

So Hans and the two big giants walked on together. They had not gone more than three or four miles when Hans spied another great giant sitting under a tall tree. As they came up to him the wind blew his hat off his head. "I will fetch it for you," cried Hans, as he ran forward after the hat; but before he could get to the spot where the hat lay, the big giant reached out his long arm and himself picked up his hat and put it again on his head. At this all three of the huge giants laughed.

"Didn't you know that he was the giant who could reach 500 yards?" asked the long-legged giant.

"No," exclaimed Hans, clapping his hands with delight. "You are just the giant I need. When I get to the North Sea you can reach down to the bottom of it and pick up the enchanted necklace of pearls. Will you not come and help me?"

The new giant thought for a minute or two and then said: "Oh, yes; I will go along if I can be of any use to you."

So Hans and the three big giants started gayly forward on their journey to the North Sea. They had not gone far before Hans saw in the distance another giant quietly leaning up against a very large rock. He seemed so deep in thought that he did not see Hans and his fellow travelers until they came near to where he stood. Hans noticed that both of this giant's ears were stopped with cotton. "Have you the earache?" asked Hans. "Perhaps I can do something to ease your pain."

"Oh, no," said the giant, "I merely stuffed cotton into my ears to shut off some of the sounds about me. I can hear so well that I can tell what men are saying a hundred miles away from me."

"What a valuable giant you must be!" exclaimed Hans. "Will you not come with me? When I get the enchanted necklace of

pearls you can tell me whether it will be safe to take it back to the king's palace."

The giant being very good-natured, said: "You think you will need me, do you? Well, I'll go along."

So Hans and the four big giants walked until they came to the North Sea. Then they got into a boat and rowed out to the deep water. The gaint who could see so far soon found the place where the necklace lay on the sand at the bottom of the sea. Then the giant whose arms were so long reached down and picked up the necklace and laid it in the boat. Hans and the giants now rowed back to the shore.

As soon as they had landed, the giant who could hear so well took the cotton out of his right ear and listened to what was being said at the king's palace. He heard the people in the palace talking of a grand festival which was to take place the next night in honor of the birthday of the beautiful princess. He then told Hans of what he had heard, and the giant who could run so fast stooped down and let Hans climb up and seat himself on his great shoulders, and away the two sped, faster than a bird could fly. They reached the palace in time for Hans to give the enchanted

necklace of pearls to the king, just as he was about to seat his beautiful daughter upon a throne beside his own.

The king was so pleased to get the necklace that he at once gave Hans the office of serving the beautiful princess. Hans served her so faithfully that she learned to love him dearly, and in time they were married. When the old king died Hans was made king and the beautiful princess was a queen. Hans, you may be sure, took good care of his old father and mother and both he and his queen did everything they could to make all the people in their kingdom industrious and happy.

Hans persuaded his four friends, the giants, to come and live in his kingdom, and through them it became the richest and most prosperous country on the face of the earth, so that travelers came from all over the world to visit it.

STORY OF THE SMALL GREEN CATERPILLAR AND THE BEAUTIFUL WHITE BUTTERFLY.

[ADAPTED.]

In a kitchen garden at the rear of an old, brick house in a country town, stood long rows of stately corn, whose shining green blades glistened in the sun and rustled if a passing breeze spoke to them. Near at hand were some thickly-leaved currant bushes which looked as if they had been so busy bearing bunches of juicy, red currants that they had found no time to grow tall like their neighbors, the corn.

Just across the garden-path was a fine bed of feathery asparagus, separated from the rest of the garden by a low wooden border about two inches high. I do not know as to whether or not it was this exclusive life they lived that made them so lacking in strength, but they were swayed by the slightest breath of air, now this way and now that. In the same garden were many other vegetables, and towering

far above them all were some giant plum trees. At least they seemed like giants to the potato vine and tomato plants near by, both of whom were of a creeping nature and had a great admiration for anybody, or anything, that was higher than themselves. The young potato vines used to look up from the top of their hills and wonder if they would ever get as near to the sky as the branches of the plum trees seemed to be. Silly things! They did not know that their only value lay in their keeping close to the ground and bearing as many fine, smooth-skinned potatoes as possible; that is, the younger vines did not know this important fact.

Our story, however, is not about the potato vines, but of something very wonderful which took place upon the outside leaf of a round, green cabbage-head which stood along with the other cabbage-heads in one corner of the garden. I don't believe you would have understood much of what was going on if you had been there, any more than did the happy-faced, little, black-eyed woman who owned the garden. She thought she loved her garden, every tree, and shrub, and herb that grew in it; still she spent a great deal more time looking at the swift-flowing river

and the stretch of hills beyond than she did at her cabbage-heads. Her neighbors said she was very far-sighted and called her clever, but the ants and beetles which lived in the garden knew that she was dull, because she spent hours each day poring over stupid books, while the most wonderful things were happening all around her, under her very nose, as it were, or rather, I should say, perhaps, under her very feet — things far more interesting than her books could possibly have been.

Among these wonderful things of which her garden could have told her was the life-story of a little green caterpillar whose home was on the outside leaf of a large green cabbage-head. He was not an inch long and not much bigger around than a good-sized broom straw, yet he was an honest little fellow in his way, and spent most of his time crawling about on his cabbage-leaf and nibbling holes in it, which you know, is about all a caterpillar can be expected to do. The great, beautiful sun, high up in the sky, sent his bright rays of light down to warm the little caterpillar just as regularly and with seemingly just as much love as he sent them to make the thousand wavelets of the swift-flowing river sparkle and gleam like diamonds, or as he sent them down

to rest in calm, still sunshine on the quiet hill-tops beyond.

The little green caterpillar's life was a very narrow one. He had never been away from his cabbage leaf, in fact he did not know that there was anything else in the world except cabbage leaves. He might have learned something of the beautiful silvery moon, or the shining stars, or of the glorious sun itself, if he had ever looked up, but he never did, therefore the whole world was a big cabbage-leaf to him, and all of his life consisted in nibbling as much cabbage-leaf as possible.

So you can easily imagine his astonishment when one day a dainty, white butterfly settled down beside him and began laying small green eggs. The little caterpillar had never before seen anything half so beautiful as were the wings of the dainty, white butterfly, and when she had finished laying her eggs and flew off, he for the first time in his whole life, lifted his head toward the blue sky that he might watch the quick motion of her wings. She was soon beyond the tallest leaves of the tomato plants, above the feathery tips of the fine asparagus, even higher than the plum trees. He watched her until she became a mere speck in the air and at last vanished from his sight.

He then sighed and turned again to his cabbage leaf. As he did so his eyes rested on the twenty small green eggs which were no larger than pin heads.

"Did she leave these for me to care for?" said he to himself. Then came the perplexing question — how could he, a crawling caterpillar, take care of baby butterflies. He could not teach them anything except to crawl and nibble cabbage leaves. If they were like their beautiful mother, would they not soon fly far beyond his reach? This last thought troubled him a great deal, still he watched over them tenderly until they should hatch. He could at least tell them of how beautiful their mother had been and could show them where to fly that they might find her.

He often pictured to himself how they would look, twenty dainty little butterflies fluttering about him on his cabbage leaf for a time, and then flying off to the blue sky, for aught he knew, to visit the stars with their mother. He loved the great sun very dearly now, because it sent its rays down to warm the tiny eggs.

One day he awoke from his afternoon nap just in time to see a most remarkable sight! What do you think was happening? One

after another of the small green eggs were breaking open, and out were crawling — what *do* you suppose! Little white butterflies? No, nothing of the kind — Little green caterpillars were creeping out of each shell. Their foster-father, as he had learned to call himself, could hardly believe his own eyes. Yet there they were, wriggling and squirming, very much like the young angleworms in the ground below.

"Well, well, well!" said he to himself, "who would ever dream that the children of that beautiful creature would be mere caterpillars?" Strange as it seemed to him, there was no denying the fact and his duty was to teach them how to crawl about and how to nibble cabbage leaves. "Poor things," he used to say as he moved among them, "you will never know the world of beauty in which your mother lived, you will never be able to soar aloft in the free air, your lives must be spent in creeping about on a cabbage leaf and filling yourselves full of it each day. Poor things! Poor things!"

The young caterpillars soon became so expert that they no longer needed his care. Feeling very tired and sleepy, he one day decided to make for himself a bed, or bag

and go to sleep, not caring much whether or not he ever awoke. He was soon softly wrapped from head to foot in the curious covering he had made, and then came a long, long sleep of three weeks or more. When at last he awakened, he began to work his head out of his covering. Soon his whole body was free and he began to breathe the fresh air and feel the warm sunshine. He was sure that something had happened to him though he could not tell what. He turned his head this way and that, and at last caught sight of his own sides. What do you think he saw? Wings! Beautiful white wings! And his body was white, too! The long sleep had changed him into a butterfly!

He began to slowly stretch his wings. They were so new he could hardly believe that they were part of himself. The more he stretched them the more beautiful they became, and soon they quivered and fluttered as gracefully as did other butterfly wings. Just at this moment a strong, fresh breeze swept over the garden, and before he had time to refuse, the new butterfly was lifted off the cabbage leaf and was dancing through the air, settling down now on a bright flower, and now on a nodding blade of grass, then up

and off again. He rejoiced gaily in his freedom for a time, but soon came the longing to try his wings in the upper sunshine.

Before attempting the unknown journey, however, he flew back to the round, green cabbage-head on which he had lived so long. There were the twenty, small, green caterpillars, still creeping slowly about and filling themselves with cabbage-leaf. This was all they knew how to do, and this they did faithfully. "Never mind, little caterpillars," said the new butterfly as he hovered over them, "keep on at your work; the cabbage leaf gives you food, and the crawling makes you strong. By and by you, too, shall be butterflies and go forth free and glad into God's great upper world."

Having said this in so low a tone of voice that you would not have heard him had you been standing close by, he flew far away, so far that neither you nor I could have followed him with our eyes. As for the happy-faced, little, black-eyed woman, she did not even know that he had been near her, for her eyes were fastened on her book, as usual. But the small, green, caterpillars must have heard, for they went on crawling and nibbling cabbage-leaves quite contentedly, and not one of

them was ever heard to complain of having to be a caterpillar, though occasionally one and then another of them would lift his head, and I doubt not he was thinking of the time when he, too, should become a beautiful white butterfly.

THE DISCONTENTED MILL WINDOW.

A tall flour mill once stood in the midst of a busy noisy town. Its steep, slanting roof was far above any other roof in the place, and its many windows looked out over the chimney tops, and into the back yards and saw all that was going on in them.

Under the very eaves of this slanting roof was a little round window. Because it was so high above the other windows, from it you could have seen not only all that was being done in the busy city, but the broad, green fields outside of the town, and, on a clear day, you could even have caught a glimpse of the vast ocean which lay shining so mysteriously beyond the end of land. It was because this glimpse of the great ocean could be seen through the little round window that the mill-owner brought many visitors up to the top story to see the beautiful vision. Oftentimes the guests reached the window, panting, and out of breath from having to climb so many steps, but they always exclaimed, "How glad

I am that I came! How beautiful it is! How *beautiful* it is!"

Every noon some of the tired, dusty workmen would come and look out of the little round window, sometimes almost forgetting to eat the bread and meat they held in their hands. Oftentimes the window would hear them say, "It rests one's tired bones to know that the great ocean is not so far away after all." There was one pale, sad-faced man who used to come every day and lean his elbows on the window sill and gaze, and gaze as if he were never tired of looking out on the view which the little round window presented.

When the mill whistle sounded its shrill, sharp note, telling the men that the noonday rest was over and that they must be back at their work, the pale, sad-faced man would sigh, and as he turned away, would say softly to himself, "I don't believe I could stand the grind of this mill life if I didn't get a breath of ocean air from this window each day!"

Once in a while, a good father would bring his children up to the window and, lifting them in his strong arms, would let them see the green fields and shining ocean. Then the children would clap their hands and shout aloud for joy. Occasionally one would beg

that he might be allowed to go away from the noisy, dusty town, through the broad, green fields to the endless ocean beyond.

At night when all the town was hushed in sleep, and even the green fields looked cold and dark, and deep shadows seemed to be on every object, the vision of the great ocean was, if possible, more beautiful than during the bright day. At such hours the little, round window had the gleam of the never sleeping waters all to itself, as very few people have courage to climb much in the night, and none of them knew how beautiful the mighty ocean looked in the midst of darkness. So they lost the gleam of the heavenly stars as they were reflected in its wavelets. Sometimes the broad silver path which the moon spread upon the surface of the water looked as if it might be the shining stairway to the heavenly gates themselves, and the little round window felt quite sure that it saw bright angels ascending and descending this silvery stairway just as they had done in the dream of Jacob of old. At such times the little window would tremble all over with delight.

But alas! alas! now comes the sad part of my story. Time passed on, and so many

people came to look through the little, round window that scarcely a day went by in which the window did not hear exclamations of pleasure and admiration escape from their lips. Soon the foolish little window began to think that the people were talking of it, and not of the vision of the great ocean which could be seen through its round window pane. Thus it grew proud and vain, and thought *it* somehow, must be superior to ordinary glass windows, and therefore it ought not to be treated like them. So when the wet rain clouds came one day, as usual, to wash the dust off the faces of all the windows in the town, the little round window in the top of the tall mill refused to be washed. "Tut, tut, tut!" said the rain, "what nonsense! A window is good for nothing unless it is washed about once in so often."

However, the vain, little window would not listen, but held on to the grimy soot and yellow dust which had accumulated upon its surface. Even the rattle of the fierce thunder did not frighten it, and when the wind sighed and sobbed and moaned as if to beg the little window to be sensible and take the washing which the rain was trying to give it, the obstinate window merely shook in its frame and

answered, "I tell you I am not like other windows. Every body admires me. Why should I have to mind that cold, wet rain, just because other windows do. I am not going to give up my soot and my dust. *I am going to do just as I please.* Am I not above all the other windows? It is well enough for them to be slapped in the face by the rain and even sometimes washed and scrubbed from within, but none of that for *me.*"

And thus the vain, foolish little window lost its chance to be made pure and clean again.

Gradually the dust from the street, and the smoke from the neighboring chimneys settled thicker and thicker upon it, and of course the view of the busy, noisy town, of the quiet green fields and of the great, shining ocean, became dimmer and dimmer until at last they were lost sight of altogether and nothing could be seen but the round form of the window, so thick was the grime and dirt upon it.

Now the men ceased coming to the top story at their noon time, and the owner of the mill brought no more guests to its side, and the little round window, left to itself, became sad and lonely. Day after day passed and no one came near it. In fact, people seemed to have forgotten that it was in existence. One day

two boys climbed to the attic in which it had been built, and the little round window said eagerly to itself, "Now I shall hear some of the praise that belongs to me." But in a very few moments one of the boys said "Whew! how close and dark it is up here! Let's go down!" "All right," replied the other, and down they scampered without even so much as noticing the dust-covered window.

At first the window was indignant at what it termed their lack of appreciation. However, as day and night succeeded each other and days grew into weeks, and weeks stretched into a month, the little round window had plenty of time to think, and by and by came the thought, "Why did people ever crowd around me, and climb many stairs to get near me?" Then it recalled the words which it had heard, and with the recalling came the realization that the talk had all been about the beautiful view which it presented, and not about itself.

Then, indeed, it would have hung its head in shame if it could have done so, but although a window has a face, it has no head, you know, so that all it could do was to turn itself on its wooden pivots until its round face was ready to catch any drop of rain that might fall. Nor did it have long to wait. The beautiful white clouds

which had been drifting dreamily across the blue sky, changed into soft gray, and then their under parts became a heavy, dark gray, and soon they began massing themselves together. The wind arose and hurried the smaller clouds across the sky as a general might marshal his troops for a battle, and in a little while the whole heavens were covered with gray, not even a single spot of blue sky remained, nor could one yellow sunbeam be seen on the whole landscape. The low rumble of thunder could now be heard, and quick flashes of lightning darted from raincloud to raincloud and back again as if they were messengers sent to see if all was in readiness for the storm. Soon down poured the rain.

Not even the thirsty earth itself was more glad to receive the tens of thousands of water-drops than was the little round window in the top story of the tall mill. It not only had its outside face freed from the dust and soot, but with some help from the wind, it managed to turn its inside face out and thus be cleansed within as well as without.

At last the storm passed away; the sun shone again; the trees rustled their fresh, shining, green leaves, and all nature rejoiced in the renewed life which the reviving rain

had brought with it. The little round window fairly glistened as its shining face caught the golden radiance of the last beams of the setting sun. "Ah, look at the round mill window!" said the miller's wife, "the rain has washed it bright and clean. See how it reflects the sunset. To-morrow we will go up and get a view of the ocean from it — I had almost forgotten it."

THE STRANGE STORY OF A WONDERFUL SEA-GOD.

I am going to tell you to-day one of the strangest stories that has ever been told to little children. It is such a wonderful story that even grown people read it again and again

Three thousand years ago Greek mothers used to tell it to their children as they sat together on the seashore. It is about a famous king, named Menelaus, who after a long and cruel war was over, started in his good ship for his much loved home in Sparta. Thinking only of himself in his impatience to get home, he forgot to give worship to the gods, to thank them for his deliverance and to ask them to guide him safely to his journey's end. We shall soon see what trouble his thoughtlessness brought upon him, and not him alone, but all his followers.

In those days there were no great ocean steamers such as we have now, therefore Menelaus and his men had to cross the dark,

mysterious sea in small boats which they rowed with oars. Sometimes when the wind was favorable they would hoist a sail and thus be helped along on their journey. As it was impossible for them to go forward when the strong, though invisible, wind was not blowing in a favorable direction, you can easily imagine their dismay when, having stopped one evening in a sheltered bay on the coast of a small island, they awoke next morning to find the wind blowing steadily in the opposite direction from the one in which they wished to sail. They waited all day hoping that the strong breeze would die down, or change its direction. The next day and the next passed and still the wind blew steadily away from their beloved homes. Although it *was* invisible it had more strength than all of them, and they could make no headway against it. Had they not watched it lift huge waves high in the air and dash them against the sharp rocks? Had they not seen it twist and turn the strong branches of great trees, and sometimes bend, and even *break* their mighty trunks? And yet they knew at other times how gentle it could be. Had they not listened to its soft, low song as it rustled over the tall grass? How glad they always were when it

rattled and stirred their white sails, filling their hearts with promises of help on the way? They could not always understand what it was saying, but they felt sure that it came from the ever-living gods and always brought some message of love, or command to them.

So, as day after day it blew a fierce, wild gale over their heads, and on beyond, hurrying clouds across the sky, dashing the waves against the shore, whirling the dust into their faces and hurriedly uttering hoarse whispering sounds as it passed them, they knew that it was warning them against daring to continue their homeward journey.

Twenty days had come and gone, and still the wind kept up its fierce, loud tone of command as it rushed from the far away west, shook the waters of the vast ocean, swept over the small, rocky island and sped on toward the east. The courage of the poor sailors was almost exhausted. Their provisions were giving out. They had to catch fish to satisfy each day's hunger. Menelaus, their chief, was wandering alone upon the seashore. He was very unhappy, for he feared much that all this trouble had come upon his comrades because he had not obeyed the law of the gods before he left Egypt. So he was

much distressed in mind as he walked along the sandy beach.

The sun was sinking to rest, the evening shadows were settling down between the rocky hills, the darkness of night was approaching, when suddenly there stood before him a beautiful being, of so dazzling an appearance that he knew she could not be a woman, she must be an immortal. Her saffron robes gleamed with light as do the sunset clouds. Her face was as radiant as are the last rays of the departing sun. It was the beautiful goddess, Idothea. Her face suddenly became stern as she looked at King Menelaus and asked him why he tarried idly upon the small, rocky island. He replied that he did not willingly remain, but that he must surely have sinned against the gods, as they had sent a strong, fierce wind to hinder his homeward voyage. Then he earnestly begged her to tell him what to do. The stern look left her face as she heard him confess that he had done wrong. She came nearer to him, and her glittering robes changed from saffron to pink, and blue, and even gray, and the lights played above, around and about her in the most wonderful fashion, changing each moment as she spoke.

She told him that she was the daughter of

Proteus, the Ancient of the Deep, who, living for thousands and thousands of years in the bottom of the great ocean, had gone wherever the restless waves of the sea had gone, and had learned the secrets of both land and water. He knew the song of the winds and could interpret every message which they brought from the gods, therefore he, and he alone, could tell Menelaus what it was that the strong, fierce wind had been crying out to him and his companions for the past twenty days.

Now comes the strange part of our story. This sea-god, Proteus, was a most remarkable being. He had the power to change himself into whatever form he chose, as you will soon see. The only way to get any secret from him was to catch him when he was asleep, and then to *hold on* to him, no matter what shape he might choose to take, until at last he returned to his original form of the old man of the sea.

Idothea told Menelaus that this strange father of hers would rise out of the sea at about noon the next day, and would walk over to a large cavern not far distant, where his sea-calves took their daily sleep, and that when he had counted them to see if they were all

there, he would lie down in the midst of them and go to sleep also. This, said she, would be the time for Menelaus and three of his trusted sailors to spring upon him and seize him firmly, and she added that they must *hold on to him, no matter what happened*, until he changed back into his own form, that of an old man; then they could ask him any questions they wished and he would be compelled to answer them.

Having given Menelaus these instructions, the beautiful goddess suddenly plunged into the ocean and the green waves closed over her.

With bowed head and mind filled with anxious thought Menelaus returned to his men. They gathered round their boats on the seashore and ate their scanty evening meal. Silently and solemnly the night settled down upon the landscape and made the trees look like dark, shadowy forms, and the outlines of the hills grew dim, and the ocean was covered by the hush of the darkness, and silence reigned over all.

The sailors threw themselves down upon the sand and were soon fast asleep. Menelaus lay beside them, but I fear much that he did not sleep. His mind was troubled. What would the next day bring forth? He was to meet the

strange and terrible Ancient of the Deep, and was to struggle fiercely with him. Would he be able to cope with the monster? Would he have the courage to hold on to him? What awful and unknown shapes might not the creature take? These and a hundred other questions kept rising in his mind and banished all sleep from his eyes. One by one the stars came out in the deep, black sky above his head. Had not the gods kept them in their places for unnumbered ages? Could not these same gods protect and strengthen him when they knew that in his heart he was striving to learn what was their will? The night slowly wore away, and when the faint purplish light softened the eastern sky, he arose and going apart from his sleeping comrades, he knelt down and prayed earnestly to the ever-living gods. Then returning to his men, he awoke the three whom he could trust the most, and taking them with him he sought the spot where the goddess Idothea had promised to meet him. She, radiant as the dawn, was already there awaiting him.

As they approached she plunged into the sea and was lost to sight. In a few moments, however, she re-appeared bringing with her the newly flayed skins of four sea-calves. Then

quickly digging four oblong holes in the wet sand she commanded Menelaus and his three companions to lie down in them. This they did, and she skillfully spread over each of them, one of the skins which she had brought from the bottom of the ocean. After they were so closely covered that even the shrewd Proteus would mistake them for sea-calves, the radiant goddess seated herself on a rock not far distant, to await his coming.

The horrible smell which came from the skins of the newly-slain sea-calves was so sickening that Menelaus and his three comrades could not stand it, and were about to give up the attempt to capture the sea-god, when the shining goddess came to the rescue. Bringing from, they knew not whence, some fragrant ambrosia, the food of the immortals, she placed it beneath their nostrils and its sweet perfume made them forget the loathsome coverings with which they were concealed. Its refreshing odor soon restored their strength and thus they were able to remain hidden until the noon hour.

Then the sea-calves floundering much rose from the depths of the ocean and began crawling along the sand. They came in throngs and laid themselves down in rows upon the sandy

shore beside the brave but anxious heroes. Soon the sunlit waves parted from right to left and slowly and solemnly Proteus, the Ancient of the Deep, appeared. His hair and beard and garments were covered with white foam. He walked over to where his sea-calves lay basking in the sun and counted them. This was a trying time for Menelaus. His heart beat loud and fast, so great was his fear that he and his companions might be discovered. But the goddess had done her work too well for that. Proteus did not notice any difference between them and the beasts which lay about them. Having finished his task, he stretched his body upon the sand beside his flock, ready for his afternoon nap.

Now was the critical moment! Menelaus and his men throwing off the skins of the dead sea-calves sprang forward with loud shouts, and before the old sea-god knew it, they had fast hold of his arms and legs.

Proteus having the power to change his body into whatever shape he pleased, suddenly transformed himself into a roaring lion, so fierce and strong that it seemed as if he might crush anything that came in his way. Still Menelaus and his stout-hearted men *held on*. Then, in an instant the lion became a fiery panther

whose glaring eyes struck terror into their hearts, but still they *held on*. In a moment more a large snake was twisting and writhing in their hands, hissing and darting his forked tongue out as if he would gladly poison all of them, still they *held on*. Shape after shape the monster assumed, but still they *held on*. Now it was a clear, harmless stream of water flowing gently through their hands. Again it was a flame of fire darting here and there threatening to scorch their faces and even to burn out their eyes; still they *held on*. Then it became a beautiful tree, tall and stately, with broad spreading branches and shining green leaves, still they *held on*.

At last, finding that his enchantments were of no avail he changed back into his real form and turning to Menelaus he said, "What wouldst thou have?" Menelaus begged him to tell why he and his faithful sailors were kept from crossing the dark waters of the sea to their distant homes. Then Proteus, the Ancient of the Deep, who knew all secrets of both gods and men, told him that he must go back to Egypt where he had sinned, and do all that he could to atone for that sin before he might hope to reach his beloved home.

Menelaus now understood what the wind had

been trying to tell him. Each hoarse whisper as the gale rushed by, meant "Return to Egypt! Return to Egypt!" In fact, all these twenty days it had been blowing in that direction, as if to assure the mariners that it would fill their sails and help them to return to Egypt if they would only launch their boats and turn the prows eastward.

This they did the very next day, and soon were back on Egypt's shore. Due worship was paid to the gods, and then right merrily the wind whistled and sang about their ears as it filled their white sails and helped them to speed across the blue water, and in a few days they had reached their beloved home-land.

But never to the end of their lives did they forget the terrible struggle with the Mighty Proteus, Ancient of the Deep, where by *holding on* they had won the silent battle. And oftentimes they told the story to their children and grandchildren, just as I am telling it to you, to-day.

THE VISION OF DANTE.

I want to tell a beautiful story to you, dear children. It has been told over and over again for six hundred years, yet people keep reading it, and re-reading it, and wise men never tire of studying it. Many great artists have painted pictures, and sculptors have made statues, and musicians have composed operas, and clergymen have written sermons from thoughts inspired by it. A great poet first gave it to the world in the form of a grand poem which some day you may read, but I will try to tell it to you to-day as a short story. I am afraid that you would go to sleep if I should undertake to read the poem to you. You do not yet know enough about life to understand it.

Once upon a time, very long ago, there was a man whose name was Dante. He had done wrong and had wandered a long way from his home. He does not tell us how, or why. He begins by saying that he had gone to sleep in a great forest. Suddenly he awoke, and

tried to find his way out of it, first by one path, and then another; but all in vain.

Through an opening where the tall trees had not grown quite so thick, he saw in the distance a great mountain, on the top of which the sun was shining brightly. "Ah!" thought he to himself, "if I can but reach the top of that mountain I am sure I can see a long way in every direction. No woods can grow tall enough to keep me from finding my path then!" So with new courage he started toward the mountain, but he had not walked far when a beautiful spotted panther stood with glaring eyes in his pathway. He trembled, for he knew that going forward meant that he would be destroyed. He turned hastily aside into another path, but he had gone only a short distance in this direction before he saw a huge lion coming toward him. In greater haste than before he turned into still another path. His heart was beating very fast now, and he hastened along without taking much notice of what lay before him. Suddenly he came upon a lean and hungry wolf, which looked as if he could devour half a dozen men. Dante turned and fled back into the dark woods, "where the sun was silent." He thought, "What is the use of trying to get out of this terrible

forest? There are wild beasts on every side. If I escape one I am sure to be devoured by another; I might as well give up trying." He had now lost all hope.

Just at this moment he saw a man coming towards him. The face of the man was beaming with smiles as if he had some good news to tell. Dante ran forward to meet him, crying, "Have mercy on me, whoever you are! See that beast from which I have fled! My body is trembling yet with fright."

The strange man, whose name was Virgil, told Dante that he had come to help him, but that they would have to go by another path to get out of this savage wilderness. He then explained that they must go down through a deep, bad-smelling and dark hole in the ground, and must meet with many disagreeable things and crawl through much dirt and filth; but after they had gone through this close, dirty tunnel, they would again see the light, and if they had strength enough to climb, they might in the end get to a delightful spot on the top of the mountain called the Terrestrial Paradise, from which lovely place Dante could go home if he wanted to.

At first Dante was afraid to go with Virgil, although he had often read the wise and noble

books which the latter had written. But when he heard that Beatrice, whom he had loved as he loved no one else on earth, had come from Heaven in the form of a bright Angel to urge Virgil to come to him, his heart was so filled with joy that he at once renewed his courage, and told Virgil to go forward, promising that he would trust him as a guide.

They then began their perilous journey. The dark pit through which they were to pass was the shape of an immense funnel or a cone turned upside down. It was so large that it reached from the surface down to the very center of the earth. Indeed, though it was as twilight where they entered, and was quite wide and airy, yet as they slowly traveled down its rocky sides the place grew darker and narrower and the air more stifling, and the smell was worse than anything of which you have ever dreamed. At times Dante nearly fainted, but Virgil put his arms around him and held him up until he revived. I will not stop to tell you of all the horrible experiences they went through. By and by when you grow to be men and women, you can read the whole poem for yourselves.

At last they reached the bottom of the foul pit; it was the very center of the earth, and

was the darkest spot possible. Then they began to climb through the narrow opening which they saw. They wanted to get to the surface on the other side of the world, and again see the light of the sun.

Dante felt as if he were escaping from a terrible plague-stricken prison-house. The first things he looked at were four beautiful stars shining far above his head; then he knew he was where he could get fresh air and light, for he felt sure that where stars were to be seen air and light could be found. He soon discovered that he was on a large island, in the middle of which stood a great mountain. This, Virgil told Dante, was the mountain which they would have to climb.

It was Easter morning!

As they were looking about them, not knowing exactly which way to turn, they saw an old man with a long white beard. His face was so radiant that it reminded Dante of the stars at which he had been gazing. The old man told them where to go to begin the ascent of the mountain. But he said that Virgil must first get the grime and dirt off of Dante. You know we cannot very well get into dirty places without having some of the cinders and ashes and other filth stick to us. He also

kindly told them where they could find some easily bent rushes which they could use to gird up Dante's long cloak, so that he might climb the better.

I think it must have been the old man's kindness to the many strangers who came to the island that caused his face to look so beaming as to remind Dante of the stars. Poor Dante thought over all his past life, how he had wandered away from his home, how he had found himself in the gloomy woods, how he had met the fierce beasts, and last of all he thought of the blackening dirt he had gotten on himself in coming through the deep hole. Then he thought of his rescue from all these evils and the tears rolled down his cheeks. Virgil spread his hands out upon the grass, still wet with the dew from heaven, and with the moisture thus gained, he washed Dante's face. The tears Dante was shedding helped to wash away the dirt.

After this they went to where the rushes were growing and gathered some for a belt for Dante. Strange as it may sound to you, dear children, as fast as they gathered one rush, another sprang up in its place. They bound these enchanted rushes around Dante's waist,

and he was now ready for the upward climb and was quite eager to begin.

They turned and looked once more at the ocean. Dante's eyes were just beginning to get used to the sunlight. Suddenly he saw a strange white light coming along the sea towards them. He was astonished. As it came nearer and nearer the light grew more and more dazzling, and Dante saw that it was a *glorious and radiant angel!* He fell upon his knees and dropped his gaze to the ground, for the face of the angel was so bright that he could not look upon it. The strange and beautiful being came swiftly forward, bringing with him a small boat full of people, the very water became resplendent with light as the boat moved swiftly through it, yet the angel had neither oar nor sail. His shining wings, spread high above his head, seemed to waft the boat along by some invisible power. He landed the people, and — quick as a sunbeam was gone.

The newly arrived souls came up to Dante and Virgil and inquired the way, for they too were going up the steep, rough mountain, around which wound a difficult path. The end of the path no one could see. They walked along together for a short distance, and while

Virgil was searching the ground for the right path, Dante lifted his eyes upward and saw some people looking over a rocky wall that bordered the road on the next bend above them. To these fellow-travelers he called for help, as he felt sure they must have found the right path up the mountain's side. They gladly pointed out the spot where Virgil and Dante could find the way, and soon they were upon it. But now arose a serious difficulty. From the growing twilight they knew that night was coming on, and in this strange, new country nobody dared travel in the dark. There were too many pitfalls and stumbling blocks to make it safe to travel without the light of the sun. Virgil knew that the wisest and best thing to do in hours of darkness was to keep still and wait for more light. A man whom they had met on the road pointed out a safe, little valley where they could stay until the sunlight came once more.

Ah, how I wish you could have seen that valley!

It was called the Valley of the Princes. As they approached it a vision burst upon them of the loveliest spot that could be imagined. If gold and silver and scarlet and green and blue and all the finest colors in the world were

put together into a flower garden they would not make anything half so beautiful as was this Valley of the Princes. Not only were the colors so fine, but the perfumes were the sweetest ever breathed. They went quietly and slowly into the valley and sat down. The air about them grew darker and darker as the sun set behind the mountains.

All at once Dante heard some voices singing a gentle hymn. I think it must have been a hymn something like our own little hymn, "Wearily at Daylight's Close," for it made Dante think of the Heavenly Father, and look up into the sky, whose only brightness was the stars shining far above his head. As he looked he saw sweep down out of the high heavens two glad angels of God, robed in pale, shining green. Each was surrounded with a radiance so bright that it was dazzling; both carried swords of fire. Lightning never came from the sky more swiftly than did these two angels. They separated as they approached the earth; one placed himself upon the mountain on one side of the valley and the other upon the mountain on the other side. Dante wondered what all this meant, but the man who had told them where to find the valley was still with them. He explained that the

angels had come to protect all travelers who were staying in the dark valley until light should come again and they could see to go forward.

Just then Dante turned and saw a large, ugly snake winding its way silently through the grass. Quick as a flash of lightning one of the angels descended from his high post, and, with a touch of his flaming sword, turned the snake, which fled in dismay. Then Dante knew that the angels had indeed been sent from heaven, and in his heart he felt very glad that all through this dark night he might be sure of their protecting love. So he quietly laid himself down upon the grass, and went to sleep. While sleeping he had a strange dream; an eagle of fire seemed to be bearing him up through the air.

He awoke. It was morning; the sun was shining and the birds were singing. Flowers were blooming all around him — and yet it was not the same place in which he had gone to sleep. He saw on looking about him that he was farther up the mountain side. He turned with a question to Virgil, who soon told him that while he had slept in the Valley of the Princes another angel, named Lucia, had been sent from Heaven to bear him in her arms

over the rough places where he could not have traveled unaided, and that he now stood at the real entrance of the path up the mountain.

"We must pass through that gate which you see in front of you," said Virgil, "and before you enter it I must tell you that there will be some very hard climbing for you, and sometimes you will grow weary and discouraged, but be assured that it will become less painful as you climb. The hardest part is the first part. It grows easier and easier as you near the top, until, when you reach the Terrestrial Paradise, there will be no longer any climbing at all. There you shall see your beloved Beatrice and she will reveal to you a vision of GOD."

With this they started towards the gate. Now I must tell you about this gate, children, because it was a very peculiar gate, and some of these days you may have to go through it yourselves. As they came near, Dante saw that it had three broad steps leading up to it. The bottom step was like polished marble, and so shining that you could see your face reflected in it. Each traveler who approached it saw just how unclean he was, or how tired, or how cross looking. The next step was a dark purplish

black step. It was cracked lengthwise and crosswise, and had a sad look about it as if it were sorry for the reflections which it saw in the bottom step. The third step at the top was red, so red that it reminded Dante of blood. Above this towered the great gateway. Upon the sill of this gate sat another wonderful angel in shining garments which were brighter than the moon. His feet rested upon the top step.

As Dante and Virgil approached, the angel asked them what they wanted. They told him that they wished to go through the gate in order that they might climb the mountain. The angel leaned forward, and with the edge of the sword which he held in his hand he printed on Dante's forehead seven letters. Dante knew that the seven letters stood for the seven things that were wrong inside of his heart. Then the angel took from his side a silver key and a golden key, and unlocking the gate with each, he let it swing wide upon its hinges, and our two travelers passed through.

They had no sooner entered than they heard a man singing praises to God. As they traveled along the path which wound upward, they saw upon the rocks at their sides won-

derfully carved pictures of people who had been good and kind and always thoughtful of others instead of themselves. As Dante looked at them they seemed to him to be the most marvelous pictures he had ever seen. He thought within his heart, "How beautiful!" "How beautiful!" "How I wish I could be like these people!" Then he turned and looked down upon the rocks on which he was treading, he saw there were more carvings upon the stones below; but these were of people who thought of nobody but themselves — haughty people, selfish people, and idle ones.

As Dante gazed upon them, he bowed himself lower and lower, for he thought within his heart, "I fear I am more like these people than I am like the others." He had been a proud and haughty man in the past, and now he knew how ugly and selfish that haughtiness was. As he ascended the road, he must have prayed to God to make him more like the beautiful and gentle people whose portraits he had seen upon the rocks at his side. He had been walking, bent very low; all at once he straightened himself up; he felt as if some great weight had been lifted off his shoulders. He turned to Virgil, saying, "Master, from

what heavy thing have I been lightened?" Virgil glanced up at his forehead. Dante stretched forth the fingers of his hand and felt the letters which the angel had placed upon his forehead. There were but six. There had been seven. Virgil smiled, and the two passed on.

Their ears caught the sound of voices singing in sweet tones, "Blessed are the poor in spirit!" "Blessed are the poor in spirit!" Then Dante knew that the other souls, too, had prayed to God to take pride and haughtiness and selfishness out of their lives.

They passed along to the higher terrace on the mountain side, and here they saw no pictures, but heard strange, sweet voices singing through the air. These voices were singing of the people who had been glad when others were made happy, who had loved and praised the good in those about them, who had rejoiced when some one else besides themselves had been commended. The voices seemed so joyful as they told of these loving hearts, that Dante shut his eyes and listened. Soon he heard other voices tell of the people who had liked to talk of themselves and not of others, who did not care to hear anybody else praised, people whom it made unhappy to know that

anybody else was happy. "Ah!" thought he to himself, "I fear, I fear that I have been like these last people of whom the voices tell such sad, unhappy things. How I long with all my heart to be freed from this hateful thing called *Envy*!"

Then he prayed to God to help him to rejoice over the happiness of others, to be willing to help others, and to realize that others were helping him; and as he thought these thoughts and prayed this prayer, another burden seemed lifted from off him, and he put his hand to his forehead and found that another of the terrible letters was gone. He had but five remaining on his forehead now, and already the climbing seemed easier.

They soon came to another very difficult passage in the road, and so rough and sharp were the rocks which stood in the pathway that Dante's heart failed him, and he must have stopped in his onward journey up the mountain had not another loving angel of God come from some unseen point, and, lifting him with strong arms, carried him over the hard place, setting him again upon his feet. I think Dante must have thanked God for thus sending him help in his moment of discouragement; at any rate he felt that he had been slothful

and not eager enough to reach the top of the mountain.

On and on he traveled, sometimes with voices in the air singing to encourage him, sometimes with warnings coming from unknown quarters. The very trees laden with fruit on the roadside seemed to say, "Take enough of us, but do not eat too much; a glutton cannot see GOD."

As they mounted higher and higher the landscape grew broader and broader, and more filled with a strange, new sunshine. The huge boulders and angry-looking rocks below, which had so frightened Dante as he began his journey, seemed now scarcely larger than pebbles and little stones. He smiled to think that he had never cared for them at all. Weariness was now gone, the last of the mysterious letters had vanished from his forehead, and the one longing of Dante's heart was to meet again his beautiful and beloved Beatrice, and be led by her into the presence of the Great GOD of the Universe, who had so wonderfully and so mysteriously sent His angels to help him on the way.

At last they reached the spot called the Terrestrial Paradise, and there, as Virgil had told him, stood his loving Beatrice, who took

him by the hand and led him up into Heaven itself, beyond the clouds, beyond the stars, beyond planets and worlds, even to the foot of the Throne of GOD!

Of this I cannot tell you. No words of mine could make you see that glorious vision as Dante then beheld it. Your own little hearts must be freed from all wrong thoughts, from all evil motives, from all selfish desires, must be filled with a love of others, and with generous willingness to do for others, and then may come to you, too, some day, this Great Vision that came to Dante.

And you will then learn that God is with you all the time, but only the pure in heart can see Him.

Stories of Heroes.

HOW LITTLE CEDRIC BECAME A KNIGHT.

A long time ago there lived a little boy whose name was Cedric. At the foot of a high hill, on the top of which stood a grand old castle, was the stone hut in which he lived. The little boy had many a time watched the strong, iron gate rise slowly from the ground, as out of the courtyard of the castle would ride Sir Rollin DuBois and his faithful soldiers. There were sometimes two, or three visiting knights and their followers and they were a gay sight as the sun shone on their glittering armor of steel and glanced from their bright helmets. They looked so strong and resolute as they sat, calm and erect, in their saddles. A glance into their fine faces would have assured you that they were noble and brave and could be trusted by everybody, from the King to the poorest peasant in the land. Their very horses seemed proud to carry them as they galloped along. Little Cedric thought there never was anything more beautiful than these

knights as they came down the hill on some quest of adventure, or errand of mercy.

One day Cedric had been playing with his pet kitten. After a good romp with her, he had thrown himself down on the soft green grass to rest, and the queer little kitten had gone out into the middle of the dusty road and curled herself up for a nice nap. Suddenly Cedric looked up, and saw five knights with all their squires and pages galloping down the road! In a moment more his eye fell upon the kitten lying fast asleep in the middle of the highway. Fearing that the horsemen would not see her, he sprang to his feet, ran quickly forward and gathered the soft little thing up in his arms, just in time to save it from the horses' feet.

As the riders passed, one of the tall knights slackened his horse and smiling down upon Cedric said, "My little fellow, you are almost brave enough to be a knight some day." He then galloped on to join his party and soon the yellow dust which they had raised from the ground, settled down again.

Cedric stood looking after the horsemen until they seemed a mere speck in the distance and then disappeared all together. He did not even notice the kitten in his

arms when she put her nose up against his cheek.

At last he turned to go into the house, and as he went, he said softly to himself, "To be a knight some day!" "To be a knight some day!" He ate his simple supper of bread and milk in silence. His mother noticed how quiet he was, but she said nothing, for she knew that in his own good time he would tell her all that was in his heart.

That night as he undressed for bed he looked up at the stars and said in a soft, low tone, "Beautiful stars, do you know what a wonderful thing Sir Rollin said to me to-day? He told me that perhaps some day I might be a knight!" He could hardly sleep, he was so happy. The great knight had spoken to him, had praised his courage, and, best of all, had said that perhaps, some day, he, Cedric, might be a great knight himself! "Could such a thing possibly come to pass?" He asked himself this question over and over again, until at last he fell asleep and dreamed that he was a large, strong man, and wore a shining armor of steel and rode a splendid black horse, and carried a great sword and that all the people of the country round about honored and loved him because he

was one of the bravest knights in the whole land.

Just as he was dreaming that he was about to rescue a beautiful princess from an ugly giant who had shut her up in a prison, he heard his mother calling him. He opened his eyes and saw that the sky was all pink and gold with the clouds of the sunrise, and that he was only little Cedric in his attic chamber. He dressed himself quickly and climbed down the wooden ladder to the room below.

He was soon busy and happy, helping his mother feed the doves and water the cow and fetch hay for the two horses. After his father had eaten his breakfast, and had gone to his work in the field, the little would-be knight and his mother washed the dishes and tidied the two small rooms. Cedric was very fond of thus helping her with the work, and she often said, "My little boy is both son and daughter to me." By and by she sat down to her sewing. Then Cedric could keep his secret no longer. Going up to her, he put his arm around her neck and whispered to her the story of the knight, how he had stopped and spoken, and what he had said. "Do *you* think I could ever grow up to be a knight, mother?" asked he. His mother

smiled, and then looked sober as she brushed his brown hair back from his forehead and said, "Knights have many, many hard things to do, my son, and oftentimes their lives are in danger." "Yes, I know," answered Cedric eagerly, "but think, mother, how brave they are, and how good! Do they not protect our country?" "Yes," said his mother, "I know all that. I could not sleep at night when our enemies are near at hand if I did not know that Sir Rollin Dubois and his brave soldiers were on the hill close by. But you are a very little boy, Cedric. Run out to your play now."

Many times during the next few weeks little Cedric thought of the grand knights and how one of them had smiled at him and had spoken as if *he*, Cedric, might some day be a great, strong knight and ride a beautiful horse, and do brave deeds.

Weeks passed by and the spring had changed into summer. One evening, just as the setting sun was turning all the white clouds into gold and crimson, Cedric stood in the low doorway wondering if where the angels lived could be more beautiful than was the sky over his dear mountain home. He suddenly heard the tramp of horses' feet, and looking down across the

plain, he saw a gay party of horsemen. Their armor flashed and shone in the light of the setting sun and their long white plumes waved in the gentle evening breeze. His face lighted up with a glad smile, for he knew that it was Sir Rollin Dubois and his soldiers returning from the terrible war to which the King had sent them. They soon came near enough for Cedric to see their faces, as the heavy steel visors of their helmets were lifted so that they might breathe more freely the soft summer air. It had been a warm day, and Cedric noticed that even the tallest knight among them looked tired, and as if he would be glad to get to the castle and lay aside, for a while at least, his heavy armor.

Just as they were passing the door in which Cedric stood, one of them stopped his horse and leaning forward said, "My little man, will you give me a drink of water?" Cedric ran quickly and filled a cup with fresh, cool water from the spring near by, and brought it to the knight. "Thank you," said the nobleman, as he handed the cup back to Cedric. "I am very glad to be able to serve you," said Cedric quietly. The knight smiled, gathered up the reins of his horse, and said, "You are as courteous as a knight, my boy."

That evening Cedric told his mother of this second speech, and then he asked as a wistful look came over his face, "Ah, mother dear, do you think I can ever become a knight?"

Weeks passed into months and the soft, gray snow clouds had covered the green hills with the white mantle of winter. Whenever Cedric felt like being rude, or cross, or selfish, he thought of the bright smile on the great knight's face that summer evening, when he had asked for the cup of cold water, and he felt sure the smile would change into a frown if the knight should see him do a discourteous or a selfish act.

A year or two had passed when one day something happened which Cedric never forgot. His father came in from his work and said, "Sir Rollin Dubois wants a young lad to come to the castle to take the place of his page who has lately been promoted. Do you think, wife, that our Cedric is strong enough for such an office?" Cedric's heart almost stopped beating while he listened for his mother's answer. She thought for a few moments and then said slowly as if weighing each word, "Yes, I think he would try very hard to do his duty, and I should like to have him learn more of knighthood. Perhaps some

day he too may be a knight, who knows?" she added, as she turned smilingly to the radiant face of her boy.

That very afternoon she made a bundle of his few clothes, and his father took him by the hand and walked with him up the steep hill to the great castle gate. Cedric had never before been so near the castle, and when his father lifted the heavy iron knocker and brought it down with two or three loud knocks, it seemed to Cedric that his heart was knocking almost as loudly. Not that he was afraid, but he was stirred by the thought of going into the presence of the great and noble Sir Rollin whom all people loved and revered.

The huge iron gate slowly lifted. The drawbridge was already thrown across the ditch of water which surrounded the castle and in a few moments Cedric and his father had passed under the stone archway and were standing within the courtyard. A man took them into a large room whose walls and floors were of stone, and bade them sit down on a wooden bench which stood near the door, saying at the same time, "I will tell Sir Rollin that you are here."

They had been waiting some time when a

door at the other end of the room opened and a large, well built man, who looked so tall and straight that he reminded Cedric of a mountain pine, came forward. He was not dressed in armor, but Cedric knew at once that it was Sir Rollin Dubois. The knight talked a few moments with Cedric's father and then turning to Cedric he said "And you think you would like to become a knight, my boy? Are you sure that you will not mind hard work and will remember always to be true and pure, brave and unselfish?" Cedric's smile was so bright that no answer was needed. The knight turned again to his father and said, "Do you realize that it will take some ten years or more of discipline and hard work on the part of your boy, before he can hope to be promoted to a position of responsibility?" "Yes," said the father quietly, "but I think he is willing to try it."

After a little talk it was decided that the boy should begin his training then and there. So his father bade him good-bye and left. Cedric was taken by an older boy up some stone stairs to a small room whose ceiling, walls and floor were of stone. In the corner of the room lay a pile of straw, over which had been thrown a sheepskin. At one side of the room was a

small table. No other furniture was in the apartment save a cedar chest which was doubtless intended to serve for both chair and wardrobe. There was a narrow pointed window in one side of the room through which the sunlight came. Cedric went up to the window and looked out, but it was so high that he could see only the blue sky and a soft white cloud. "Ah," thought Cedric to himself, "I can at least see the stars at night and the sunlight each morning. Will they not remind me always of the good God who watches over me?"

That night his supper consisted of some coarse barley bread and a bowl of broth. Cedric, however, was used to simple food, and did not mind this part of his discipline. As he lay down upon the pile of straw and drew the sheep-skin over him, he thought of his nice warm bed at home, but instantly came this other thought, "I must learn to be hardy and strong if I am ever to do any great work in the world. So, I will not mind such little discomforts as these."

Cedric soon found that he had not only to eat coarse food and sleep upon a hard bed, but that he had to practice standing very straight, running very swiftly, being able to

manage a horse, to jump on and off while the horse was in full gallop, to throw his spear with unerring accuracy, and also that he must be prompt and ready to obey a call from Sir Rollin, that he must not only learn to do errands faithfully and quickly, but to wait patiently and quietly oftentimes when he could not understand why he waited.

Year after year passed by and little Cedric had grown large and tall. When he visited his home he used often to laugh at the little bed which had once held him so cosily. Not only had he grown strong and tall, but he had grown even more in thoughtfulness and courtesy toward all about him.

One day Sir Rollin sent for him. "Cedric," said he, "I wish you to take a message to the King. It is quite an important one and it must reach him before to-morrow night. Get ready as quickly as you can. Take my gray horse, as he is the swiftest one in the stables, and remember that I have trusted you much by sending you upon this errand."

Cedric's heart beat with joy, as he thought, "At last I have proved faithful enough to be sent with a message to our great King." He was ready in less than half an hour, and jumping on the splendid gray charger he went

galloping down the highway. On and on he rode.

At last he entered a thick forest of pine trees. The road grew very dark and lonesome. "What if I should meet some wild beast," thought Cedric, but he added, half aloud, "If I am ever to be a knight, I must learn to be brave and face every danger." It was not long before he was quite sure that he heard a deep, low growl. His heart beat fast, but he rode steadily forward and soon the growl was repeated, this time nearer and more distinct, and Cedric saw in the dim light, a great wild boar coming towards him. The creature's eyes were shining like fire, and his white tusks overhung his lower jaw in a fierce and forbidding fashion. Cedric knew that this must be the beast which had destroyed so many of the cattle of the neighboring peasants, but who was so strong and savage that no one had dared to go near him. He spurred his horse forward as he thought, "If I kill this wild boar I will already begin to be of service to the people of my country." So he lifted the spear which he carried at his side, from its leathern socket, and raising it high in the air, he hurled it swiftly at the beast who was ready to spring

upon him. In a moment more the wild boar rolled over upon the ground, dead. Cedric reached down and drew his spear from its side, and as he rode on again he thought, "Wolves and wild boars must not stop the way of a messenger of the King. I must fear nothing if I am to be a knight."

After a time his road lay out of the forest into the sunlight. As he approached a small village he heard a great noise as of much shouting and soon he saw a group of boys who were evidently hooting and laughing at something in their midst. He rode up to where they were and felt himself growing indignant as he saw an old, deformed man standing in their midst, at whom they were jeering. In a moment he sprang from his horse and pressing through the crowd of boys he stood beside the old man. On his face was a flush of indignant anger. "How dare you," he exclaimed, "laugh at or insult an old man like this?" The boys drew back, frightened. Although he was really no taller than they, he seemed to tower above them. "My," exclaimed one of them in a whisper, "doesn't he look like a knight as he stands there?" "I shouldn't wonder if he were one," said another.

Cedric turned to the old man who was

trembling in every limb. "Where are you going?" asked he kindly. "Only to the next village," said the old man, "but these boys stopped me on my way. I cannot help my deformity nor my old age. I wish I could." The tears stood in his eyes as he spoke. "Come," said Cedric gently, "let me help you upon my horse. I, too, am going to the next village."

When they had reached the next village Cedric helped the old man from the horse at his own door. Then, mounting, he thought to himself, "I am very hungry, I think I will stop at the village inn and get a good warm supper." "No," said he on second thought, "I cannot stop now. I have had to travel so slowly because of the old man that I must make up for lost time." With that he tightened the rein of his beautiful horse, and the two had soon left the village far in the distance. Cedric reached back to a leather pouch behind him and took from it a dry biscuit which had to serve for his supper that night.

Late in the evening he reached the house at which he was to rest his horse and he himself slept for a few hours. By dawn the next day he was up and off on his journey. As he was

riding by a small stream of water he noticed a poor, little fish that some thoughtless fisherman had thrown upon the bank as too insignificant to be taken home for breakfast. The tiny creature was struggling and gasping for breath as it vainly tried to get back into the water. "Ah, you poor little thing," thought Cedric, "I wish I had time to put you back into the stream, but I haven't, and so he rode on. Then came the thought, "A knight would take time to help anything that was suffering. If I am ever to be a knight I must do so too." With this thought, he turned and was soon back again at the spot where the little fish lay. He got down off of his horse, and taking the poor creature in his hand as gently as possible, he stooped down and put it into the stream of water. It swam rapidly away as if glad, beyond words, to get back into its own element. Its swiftly moving tail seemed to Cedric, as he watched it for a moment, to say, "Thank you, Cedric, thank you, thank you!" He then jumped on his horse again and rode on.

The day grew very warm, but Cedric knew that he must not stop for his own comfort; his errand was an important one and he must reach the King's palace before night.

At last the beautiful palace came in sight and in a few moments Cedric had ridden into the courtyard. He gave his letter to a servant to carry it to one of the squires who gave it to a courtier who presented it to the King; for you must remember in those days a King was a very great person, and only those men who had risen high in rank could approach him.

Among other things the note contained this message. It told the King that the bearer was a young lad who had been in training for knighthood and that Sir Rollin had found him always brave and trustworthy, true and noble, kind and courteous, and that he, Sir Rollin, thought if the King wanted him in his army, he would find him worthy of the place.

The King sent for Cedric to come to him personally. Our little boy had grown into a tall man, you know, and his frank, pure face was good to look upon. The King told him that he wished to put him in office in his army; and thus Cedric went to live in the King's household and here he learned many things which he could not have learned at the castle of Sir Rollin DuBois.

Several years passed by, and Cedric had been intrusted with many enterprises, both difficult and dangerous. At last one day the King sent for him to come into the throne room. There sat the King upon a beautiful throne of gold; beside him sat the queen. Over their head was a crimson velvet canopy. Standing about the room were a great number of courtiers and grand ladies. As Cedric entered the room, the King said, "Come forward."

Cedric stepped forward and kneeled upon one knee before the throne, as was the custom in those days. The King raised his beautiful golden scepter and struck Cedric lightly upon the shoulder with it, saying at the same time, "Rise, Sir Cedric of Altholstane." And Cedric knew then that he was, at last, a knight!

In time he had a beautiful castle of his own, and splendid armor, the most beautiful black horse that you ever saw. The handsome horse used to prance and toss his head proudly in the air as if he knew what a noble young knight he was carrying. After a while Cedric had a lovely wife and two or three sweet little children of his own, and as he rode

abroad over the country, many a time the peasants standing in their cottage doors, would say to each other, "There goes the brave Sir Cedric of Altholstane. God bless him! May he live long to help protect our country." And all the people loved him.

STORY OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS FOR LITTLE CHILDREN.

Once upon a time, far across the great ocean there lived a little boy named Christopher. The city in which he lived was called Genoa. It was on the coast of the great sea, and from the time that little Christopher could first remember he had seen boats come and go across the water. I doubt not that he had little boats of his own which he tried to sail, or paddle about on the small pools near his home.

Soon after he was old enough to read books, which in those days were very scarce and very much valued, he got hold of an account of the wonderful travels of a man named Marco Polo. Over and over again little Christopher read the marvelous stories told by this old traveler, of the strange cities which he had seen and of the dark-colored people whom he had met; of the queer houses; of the wild and beautiful animals he had encountered; of the jewels and perfumes and flowers which he had come across.

All day long the thoughts of little Christopher were busy with this strange far-away land which Marco Polo described. All night long he dreamed of the marvelous sights to be seen on those distant shores. Many a time he went down to the water's edge to watch the queer ships as they slowly disappeared in the dim distance, where the sea and sky seemed to meet. He listened eagerly to everything about the sea and the voyages of adventure, or of trade which were told by the sailors near.

When he was fourteen years old he went to sea with an uncle, who was commander of one of the vessels that came and went from the port of Genoa. For a number of years he thus lived on a vessel, learning everything that he could about the sea. At one time the ship on which he was sailing had a desperate fight with another ship; both took fire and were burned to the water's edge. Christopher Columbus, for that was his full name, only escaped, as did the other sailors, by jumping into the sea and swimming to the shore. Still this did not cure him of his love for the ocean life.

We find after a time that he left Italy, his native country, and went to live in Portugal,

a land near the great sea, whose people were far more venturesome than had been those of Genoa. Here he married a beautiful maiden, whose father had collected a rich store of maps and charts, which showed what was then supposed to be the shape of the earth and told of strange and wonderful voyages which brave sailors had from time to time dared to make out into the then unknown sea. Most people in those days thought it was certain death to any one who ventured very far out on the ocean.

There were all sorts of queer and absurd ideas afloat as to the shape of the earth. Some people thought it was round like a pancake and that the waters which surrounded the land gradually changed into mist and vapor and that he who ventured out into these vapors fell through the mist and clouds down into — they knew not where. Others believed that there were huge monsters living in the distant waters ready to swallow any sailor who was foolish enough to venture near them.

But Christopher Columbus had grown to be a very wise and thoughtful man and from all he could learn from the maps of his father-in-law and the books which he read, and from the long talks which he had with some other

learned men, he grew more and more certain that the world was round like an orange, and that by sailing westward from the coast of Portugal one could gradually go round the world and find at last the wonderful land of *Cathay*, the strange country which lay far beyond the sea, the accounts of which had so thrilled him as a boy.

We, of course, know that he was right in his belief concerning the shape of the earth, but people in those days laughed him to scorn when he spoke of making a voyage out on the vast and fearful ocean. In vain he talked and reasoned and argued, and drew maps to explain matters. The more he proved to his own satisfaction that this must be the shape of the world, the more other people shook their heads and called him crazy.

He remembered in his readings of the book of Marco Polo's travels that the people whom he had met were heathen who knew little about the dear God who had made the world, and nothing at all about His son, Christ Jesus, and as Christopher Columbus loved very dearly the Christian religion, his mind became filled with a longing to carry it across the great seas to this far-away country. The more he thought about it the more he wanted

to go, until his whole life was filled with the one thought of how to get hold of some ships to prove that the earth was round, and that these far-away heathens could be reached.

Through some influential friends he obtained admission to the court of the King of Portugal. Eagerly he told the rich monarch of the great enterprise which filled his heart. It was of little or no use, the King was busy with other affairs, and only listened to the words of Columbus as one might listen to the wind. Year after year passed by, Columbus' wife had died, and their one little son, Diego, had grown to be quite a boy. Finally Columbus decided he would leave Portugal and would go over to Spain, a rich country near by, and see if the Spanish monarchs would not give him boats in which to make his longed-for voyage.

The Spanish King was named Ferdinand, and the Spanish Queen was a beautiful woman named Isabella. When Columbus told them of his belief that the world was round, and of his desire to help the heathen who lived in this far-off country, they listened attentively to him, for both King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella were very earnest people and very desirous that all the world should become

Christians; but their ministers and officers of state persuaded them that the whole thing was a foolish dream of an enthusiastic, visionary man; and again Columbus was disappointed in his hope of getting help.

Still he did not give up in despair. *The thought was too great for that.* He sent his brother over to England to see if the English King would not listen to him and give the necessary help, but again he was doomed to disappointment. Only here and there could he find any one who believed that it was possible for him to sail round the earth and reach the land on the other side. Long years passed by. Columbus grew pale and thin with waiting and hoping, with planning and longing.

Sometimes as he walked along the streets of the Spanish capital people would point their fingers at him and say: "There goes the crazy old man who thinks the world is round." Again and again Columbus tried to persuade the Spanish King and Queen that if they would aid him, his discoveries would bring great honor and riches to their kingdom, and that they would also become the benefactors of the world by helping to spread the knowledge of Christ and His religion. Nobody believed in his theory.

Nobody was interested in his plan. He grew poorer and poorer.

At last he turned his back on the great Spanish court, and in silent despair he took his little son by the hand and walked a long way to a small seaport called Palos, where there was a queer old convent in which strangers were often entertained by the kind monks who lived in it. Weary and footsore he reached the gate of the convent. Knocking upon it he asked the porter, who answered the summons, if he would give little Diego a bit of bread and a drink of water. While the two tired travelers were resting, as the little boy ate his dry crust of bread, the prior of the convent, a man of thought and learning, whose name was Juan Perez, came by and at once saw that these two were no common beggars. He invited them in and questioned Columbus closely about his past life. He listened quietly and thoughtfully to Columbus and his plan of crossing the ocean and converting the heathen to Christianity.

Juan Perez had at one time been a very intimate friend of Queen Isabella; in fact, the priest to whom she told all her sorrows, and troubles. He was a quiet man and

talked but little. After a long conference with Columbus, in which he was convinced that Columbus was right, he borrowed a mule and getting on his back rode for many miles across the open country to the palace in which the Queen was then staying. I do not know how he convinced her of the truth of Columbus' plan, when all the ministers and courtiers and statesmen about her considered it the absurdly foolish and silly dream of an old man; but, somehow, he did it.

He then returned on his mule to the old convent at Palos, and told Columbus to go back once more to the court of Spain and again petition the Queen to give him money with which to make his voyage of discovery. The State Treasurer said the Queen had no money to spare, but this noble-hearted woman, who now, for the first time, realized that it was a grand and glorious thing Columbus wished to do, said she would give her crown jewels for money with which to start Columbus on his dangerous journey across the great ocean.

This meant much in those days, as queens were scarcely considered dignified or respectable if they did not wear crowns of gold inlaid

with bright jewels on all public occasions, but Queen Isabella cared far more to send the gospel of Christ over to the heathen than how she might look, or what other people might say about her. The jewels were pawned and the money was given to Columbus. With a glad heart he hastened back to the little town of Palos where he had left his young son with the kind priest Juan Perez.

But now a new difficulty arose. Enough sailors could not be found who would venture their lives by going out on this unknown voyage with a crazy old man such as Columbus was thought to be. At last the convicts from the prisons were given liberty by the Queen on condition that they would go with the sailors and Columbus. So, you see, it was not altogether a very nice crew, still it was the best he could get, and Columbus' heart was so filled with the great work that he was willing to undertake the voyage no matter how great or how many the difficulties might be. The ships were filled with food and other provisions for a long, long voyage.

Nobody knew how long it would be before the land on the other side could be reached, and many people thought there was no possible hope of its ever being found.

Early one summer morning, even before the sun had risen, Columbus bade farewell to the few friends who had gathered at the little seaport of Palos to say good-bye to him. The ships spread their sails and started on the great untried voyage. There were three boats, none of which we would think, nowadays, was large enough or strong enough to dare venture out of sight and help of land and run the risk of encountering the storms of mid-ocean.

The names of the boats were the Santa Maria, which was the one that Columbus himself commanded, and two smaller boats, one named the Pinta and the other the Nina.

Strange, indeed, must the sailors have felt, as hour after hour they drifted out into the great unknown waters, which no man ever ventured into before. Soon all land faded from their sight, and on, and on, and on they went, not knowing where or how the voyage would end. Columbus alone was filled with hope, feeling quite sure that in time he would reach the never before visited shores of a New World, and would thus be the means of bringing the Christian religion to these poor, ignorant people. On and on they sailed, day after

day — far beyond the utmost point which sailors had ever before reached.

Many of the men were filled with a strange dread and begged and pleaded to return home. Still on and on they went, each day taking them further and further from all they had ever known or loved before. Day after day passed, and week after week until two months had elapsed.

The provisions which they had brought with them were getting scarce, and the men now dreaded starvation. They grew angry with Columbus, and threatened to take his life if he did not command the ships to be turned back towards Spain, but his patience did not give out, nor was his faith one whit the less. He cheered the hearts of the men as best he could. Often telling them droll, funny stories to distract their thoughts from the terrible dread which now filled all minds.

He promised a rich reward to the first man who should discover land ahead. This somewhat renewed their courage, and day and night watches were set and the western horizon before them was scanned at all hours. Time and again they thought they saw land ahead, only to find they had mistaken a cloud upon the horizon for the longed-for shore. Flocks

of birds flying westward began to be seen. This gave some ground for hope. For surely the birds must be flying toward some land where they could find food, and trees in which to build their nests. Still fear was great in the hearts of all, and Columbus knew that he could not keep the men much longer in suspense, and that if land did not appear soon they would compel him to turn around and retrace his steps whether he wished to or not.

Then he thought of all the benighted heathen who had never heard of God's message of love to man through Christ, and he prayed almost incessantly that courage might be given him to go on. Hour after hour he looked across the blue water, day and night, longing for the sight of land. In fact, he watched so incessantly that his eyesight became injured and he could scarcely see at all.

At last one night as he sat upon the deck of the ship he was quite sure that a faint light glimmered for a few moments in the distant darkness ahead. Where there is a light there must be land, he thought. Still he was not sure, as his eyesight had become so dim. So he called one of the more faithful sailors to him and asked him what he saw. The sailor exclaimed:

"A light, a light!"

Another sailor was called, but by this time the light had disappeared and the sailor saw nothing, and Columbus' hopes again sank. Still he felt they must be nearing land. About 2 o'clock that night the commander of one of the other boats started the cry:

"Land! land ahead!"

You can well imagine how the shout was taken up, and how the sailors, one and all, rushed to the edge of their ships, leaning far over, no doubt, and straining their eyes for the almost unhoped-for sight.

Early the next morning some one of the sailors picked up a branch of a strange tree, lodged in the midst of which was a tiny bird's nest. This was sure evidence that they were indeed near land, for branches of trees do not grow in water.

Little by little the land came in sight. First it looked like a dim ghost of a shore, but gradually it grew distinct and clear. About noon the next day the keel of Columbus' boat ground upon the sand of the newly discovered country. No white man had ever before set eyes upon it. No ship had ever before touched this coast.

At last after a long life of working and

studying, of hoping and planning, of trying and failing, and trying yet again, he had realized his dream.

The great mystery of the ocean was revealed, and Columbus had achieved a glory which would last as long as the world lasted. *He had given a new world to mankind!* He had reached the far distant country across the ocean, which scarcely any of his countrymen had even believed to have any existence. He now *knew* that the whole round world could in time have the Christian religion.

He sprang upon the shore, and dropping on his knees he first stooped and kissed the ground, and then he offered a fervent prayer of thanks to God.

A learned attorney who had come with him across the water next planted the flag of Spain upon the unknown land, and claimed the newly discovered country in the name of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain.

Wonderful, wonderful indeed were the things which Columbus and the sailors now saw! Strange naked men and women of a copper, or bronze color, strange new birds with gorgeous tails that glittered like gems such as they had never seen before; beautiful and un-

known fruits and flowers met their gaze on every side.

The savages were kind and gentle and brought them food and water. They had little else to offer as they had no houses, nor streets, nor carriages, nor cars, nor conveniences of any kind. Do you know, my dear children, that this strange, wild, savage country which Columbus had traveled so far and so long to discover was *our country, America?*

But it was not long until after Columbus had gone back to Europe and told the people there of the wonderful things which he had seen in this far, far away land that ship-loads of white people, who were educated and who had been taught to love God and to keep his commandments, came over and settled in this wild, new country. They plowed the land and planted seed; they built houses for themselves, their wives and little ones, and in time they made school-houses for the children, and churches in which to worship God. Long and hard was the struggle which these first white men had to make in this strange, new country.

Year after year more and more white men came. These new settlers prospered, and new towns were built, and roads were made from

one town to another, and stores and manufactories began to be seen.

At last the little handful of people had grown so strong that they established a government of their own, which welcomed all newcomers, providing they were law-abiding citizens. The poor and oppressed, the persecuted and discouraged in other lands came to this new shore, where they found wealth if they were willing to work for it.

Here they need no longer fear the persecutions from which they had suffered. Here they gained new hope and became honored and respected citizens.

Little by little the small country grew into a great nation, the greatest on earth, because it is the freest, and each citizen in it has his rights respected. But for the courage and determination and self-sacrifice of Columbus this great new world might have remained for hundreds of years unknown to men.

Four hundred years afterwards the children of the children's children of these earl[illegible] tlers, had a grand celebration in honor of the brave old man, Christopher Columbus, whom the people of his day called crazy, and all the nations of the earth were invited to bring

their most beautiful, their richest and rarest products to this celebration, in order that not we of America alone, but *the whole world might celebrate the wisdom and the courage of the great Columbus*, "*the finder of America.*"

In the rejoicing and in the celebration the nations did not forget the good Queen Isabella, who was willing to give up her most precious jewels in order that she might help Columbus in his voyage of discovery.

A STORY OF DECORATION DAY FOR THE LITTLE CHILDREN OF TO-DAY.

I want you to listen to a sad, sweet story to-day, and yet one that ought to make you glad,— glad that such men have lived as those of whom I am going to tell you. It all happened a good many years ago, in fact so long ago that your fathers and mothers were little boys and girls in kilts and pinafores, some of them mere babies in long clothes.

One bright Sunday morning in April the telegraph wires could be heard repeating the same things all over the land, "Tic, tic; tictic; t-i-c; tic, tictic;—tic, t-i-c, tic; t-i-c; tic, t-i-c; t-i-c, t-i-c, tic," they called out, and the drowsy telegraph operators sat up in their chairs as if startled by the words the wires were saying.

"Tic, t-i-c, tic; tictic; tic, tictic; tic; t-i-c, tictic;—tic, tic; t-i-c, tic," continued the wires and the faces of the telegraph operators grew pale. Any looker-on could

have seen that something dreadful was being told by the wires.

"Tic, t-i-c, tic; tictic; tic, tictic; tic; t-i-c, tictic; — tic, tic; t-i-c, tic," again repeated the wires. There was no mistaking the message this time. Alas, alas, it was true! The terrible news was true! Even the bravest among the operators trembled.

Then came the rapid writing out of the fearful words that the slender wires had uttered, the hurrying to and fro; and messenger boys were seen flying to the great newspaper offices, and the homes of the mayors of the cities, and to the churches where already the people were beginning to assemble. For the deep-toned Sabbath church bells high up in the steeples had been ringing out their welcome to all, even the strangers in their midst — "Bim! Baum! Bim!" they sang, which eveybody knew meant, "Come to church, dear people! Come! Come! Come!" And the people strolled leisurely along toward the churches,— fathers and mothers and little ones, and even grandfathers and grandmothers. It was such a bright, pleasant day that it seemed a joy to go to the house of God and thank Him for all His love and care. So one family after another filed into their pews while the organist played

such soft, sweet music that everybody felt soothed and quieted by it.

Little did they dream of the awful words which the telegraph wires were at that very moment calling out with their "Tic, t-i-c, tic; t-i-c; tic, t-i-c; t-i-c, t-i-c, tic; — Tic, t-i-c, tic, tictic, tic, tictic; tic; t-i-c; tictic."

The clergymen came in and took their places in the pulpits. In each church the organ ceased its wordless song of praise. The congregation bowed and silently joined with all their hearts in the petitions which the clergyman was offering to the dear Lord, Father of all mankind, Ruler of heaven and earth. Some of them softly whispered "Amen" as he asked protection for their homes and their beloved country. Did they know anything about the danger which even then hung over them? Perhaps they did.

In many of the churches the prayer was over, the morning hymn had been sung, when a stir and bustle at the door might have been noticed, as the messenger boys, excited and out of breath, handed their yellow envelopes to the ushers who stood near the door ready to show the late comers to unoccupied seats. First one and then the other ushers read the

message, and from some one of them escaped in a hushed whisper, the words, "Oh God! Has it come to this!"

And all looked white and awe-struck. The head usher hurried tremblingly down the aisle, and without waiting for the clergy man to finish reading the announcements of the week, laid the telegram upon the pulpit desk.

The clergyman, somewhat surprised at such an interruption, glanced at the paper, stopped, gasped, picked it up, and re-read the words written upon it, as though he could not believe his own eyes. Then he advanced a step forward, holding on to the desk, as if he had been struck a blow by some unseen hand. The congregation knew that something terrible had happened, and their hearts seemed to stop beating as they leaned forward to catch his words.

"My people," said he in a slow, deliberate tone, as if it were an effort to steady his voice, "I hold in my hand a message from the President of the United States." Then his eyes dropped to the paper which he still held, and now his voice rang out clear and loud as he read, "*Our Flag has been fired upon! Seventy-*

five thousand troops wanted at once. Abraham Lincoln."

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I could not make you understand all that took place the next week or two any more than the little children who heard what the telegram said, understood it. Men came home, hurried and excited, to hunt up law papers, or to straighten out deeds, saying in constrained tones to the pale-faced women, "I will try to leave all business matters straight before I go." There was solemn consultations between husbands and wives, which usually ended in the father's going out, stern-faced and silent, and the mother, dry-eyed but with quivering lips, seeking her own room, locking herself in for an hour, then coming out to the wondering children with a quiet face, but with eyes that showed she had been weeping. There were gatherings in the town halls and in the churches and school houses all over the land. The newspapers were read hurriedly and anxiously.

And when little Robert looked up earnestly into his Grandmamma's face and asked, "Why does Mamma not eat her breakfast?" Grandmamma replied, "Your Papa is going

away, my dear;" and when little Robert persisted, by saying, "But Papa goes to New York every year, and Mamma does not sit and stare out of the window, and forget to eat her breakfast." Then Mamma would turn solemnly around and say, "Robert, my boy, Papa is going to the war, and may never come back to us. But you and I must be brave about it, and help him get ready." And if Robert answered, "Why is he going to the war? Why does he not stay at home with us? Doesn't he love us any more?" then Mamma would draw her boy to her and putting her arms around him, and looking into his eyes, she would say, "Yes, my darling, he loves us, but he *must* go. Our country needs him, and you and I must be proud that he is ready to do his duty." Then Robert would go away to his play, wondering what it all meant, just as you would have wondered if you had been there.

Soon the Papas and Uncles, and even some of the Grandfathers, put on soldiers' uniforms, and drilled in the streets with guns over their shoulders, and bands of music played military music, and the drums beat, and crowds of people collected on the street corners, and there were more speeches, and more flags, and banners, and stir, and excitement. And nothing

else was talked of but the war, the war, the terrible war.

Then came the marching away of the soldiers to the railway stations, and then the farewells and cheers and waving of handkerchiefs and the playing of patriotic airs by the bands of music, and much more confusion and excitement and good-bye kisses and tears than I could tell you of.

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Then came the long, long days of waiting and praying in the homes to which fathers and brothers no longer came, and silent watching for letters, and anxious opening of the newspapers, and oftentimes the little children felt their Mamma's tears drop on their faces as she kissed them good-night, — their dear Mamma who so often had sung them to sleep with her gay, happy songs, — what did it all mean? They could not tell.

And all this time the fathers, brave men as they were, had been marching down to the war. Oftentimes they slept on the hard ground with only their army blankets wrapped around them, and the stars to keep watch over them, and many a day they had nothing to eat but dry bread and black coffee, because they had not time to cook more, and sometimes

they had no breakfast at all because they must be up by day-break and march on, even if the rain poured down, as it sometimes did, wetting them through and through. What were such hardships when *their country was in danger?*

Then came the terrible, terrible battles, more awful than anything you ever dreamed of. Men were shot down by the thousands, and many who did not lose their lives had a leg shot off, or an arm so crushed that it had to be cut off. Still they bravely struggled on. It was for their beloved country they were fighting, and for it they must be willing to suffer, or to die.

Then a hundred thousand more soldiers were called for, and then another hundred thousand, and still the bloody war continued. For four long years it lasted, and the whole world looked on, amazed at such courage and endurance.

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Then the men who had not been killed, or who had not died of their sufferings came marching home again, many, alas, on crutches, and many who knew that they were disabled for life. But *they had saved their country!* And that was reward enough for their heroic hearts. Though many a widow turned her sad face

away when the crowd welcomed the returning soldiers, for she knew that her loved one was not with them, and many little children learned in time that their dear fathers would never return to them.

War is such a terrible thing that it makes one's heart ache to think of it.

Then by and by the people said, "our children must grow up loving and honoring the heroic men who gave their lives for their country." So in villages and towns, and cities, monuments were built in honor of the men who died fighting for their country. And one day each year was set apart to keep fresh and green the memory of the brave soldiers, and it has been named "DECORATION DAY," because on this day all the children, all over the land, are permitted to go to the graves of the dead soldiers and place flowers upon them.

OLD JOHNNY APPLESEED.

THE RAGGED OLD HERO.

A True Story.

Many years ago on the sparsely settled prairies of America there lived an old man who was known by the queer name of "Johnny Appleseed." His wife had died long ago and his children had grown up and scattered to the corners of the earth. He had not even a home that he could call his own, but wandered about from place to place, with only few friends and little or no money. His face was wrinkled, his hair was thin and gray, and his shoulders stooped. His clothes were old and ragged and his hat was old and shabby. Yet inside of him was a heart that was brave and true, and he felt that even he, old and poor as he was, could be of use in the world, because he loved his fellow-men, and love always finds something to do.

As he trudged along the lonely road from town to town, or made for himself a path through the unbroken forest, he often thought of the good God, and of how all men were chil-

dren of the One Father. Sometimes he would burst out singing the words of a song which he had learned when he was a young man.

"Millions loving, I embrace you,
All the world this kiss I send!
Brothers, o'er yon starry tent
Dwells a God whose love is true!"

These words, by the way, are a part of a great poem you may some day read. And they once so stirred the heart of a great musician that he set them to the finest music the world has ever heard. And now the great thought of a loving God and the great music of a loving man comforted the lonely traveller.

The old man wandered about from village to village, which in those days were scattered far apart, with miles and miles of prairie land stretching between them, and sometimes woodland and rivers, too, separated one village from the next. At night he usually earned his crust of bread and lodgings by mending the teakettle or wash-boiler of some farmer's wife, or by soldering on the handle of her tin cup or the knob to her tea-pot, as he always carried in one of his coat pockets a small charcoal stove and a bit of solder. He always carried under his arm or over his shoulder a green baize bag, and when the mending was done he would oftentimes draw out of this green bag an old violin

and begin to play, and the farmer, as well as his wife and the children, would gather around him and listen to his strange music.

Sometimes it was gay and sometimes it was sad, but always sweet. Sometimes he sang words that he himself had written, and sometimes the songs which had been written by the great masters. But mending broken tinware and playing an old violin were not the only things he did to help the world along. As he wandered from place to place he often noticed how rich the soil was, and he would say to himself, "Some day this will be a great country with thousands of people living on this land, and though I shall never see them, they may never read my verses or hear my name, still I can help them, and add some things to their lives.

So whenever a farmer's wife gave him an apple to eat he carefully saved every seed that lay hidden in the heart of the apple, and next day as he trudged along he would stoop down every now and then and plant a few of the seeds and then carefully cover them with the rich black soil of the prairie. Then he would look up reverently to the sky and say, "I can but plant the seed, dear Lord, and Thy clouds may water them, but Thou alone can give the increase. Thou only can cause this tiny seed to

grow into a tree whose fruit shall feed my fellow men." Then the God-like love that would fill his heart at such a thought would cause his face to look young again and his eyes to shine as an angel's eyes must shine, and oftentimes he would sing in clear rich tones—

"Millions loving, I embrace you,
All the world this kiss I send!
Brothers, o'er yon starry tent
Dwells a God whose love is true!"

And he knew that God dwelt in his heart as well as in the blue sky above.

When the cold winters came and the ground was frozen too hard for him to plant his apple seeds, he still saved them, and would often have a small bag full of them by the time that spring returned again. And this is how he came to be called "Old Johnny Appleseed."

Though nobody took very much notice of what he was doing, he still continued each day to plant apple seeds and each evening to play on his violin.

By-and-by his step grew slower and his shoulders drooped lower until at last his soul, which had always been strong and beautiful, passed out of his worn old body into the life beyond, and the cast-off body was buried by some villagers who felt kindly towards the old man, but who never dreamed that he had ever

done any real service for them or their children. And soon his very name was forgotten. But the tiny apple seeds took root and began to grow, and each summer the young saplings grew taller and each winter they grew stronger, until at last they were young trees, and then they were old enough to bear apples. As people moved from the east out to the wild western prairies they naturally enough selected sites for building their homes near the fruitful apple trees, and in the spring time the young men gathered the blossoms for the young maidens to wear in their hair, and in the autumn the fathers gathered the ripe red and yellow apples to store away in their cellars for winter use, and the mothers made apple sauce and apple pies and apple dumplings of them, and all the year round the little children played under the shade of the apple trees, but none of them ever once thought of the old man who had planted for people he did not know, and who could never even thank him for his loving services.

Each apple that ripened bore in its heart a number of new seeds, some of which were planted and grew into fine orchards from which were gathered many barrels of apples. These were shipped farther west, until the Rocky Mountains were reached. In the centre of each apple shipped were more seeds, from which

grew more apple trees, which bore the same kind of apples that the wrinkled old man in the shabby old clothes had planted long years before. So that many thousands of people have already been benefited by what the poor old man in the shabby old coat did, and thousands yet to come will enjoy the fruits of his labor.

It is true he never wore the armour of a great knight and never held the title of a great general. He never discovered a new world, nor helped his favorite to sit on the throne of a king. But perhaps after all, though ragged and poor, he was a hero, because in his heart he really and truly sang, as well as with his lips.

> "Millions loving, I embrace you,
> All the world this kiss I send!
> Brothers, o'er yon starry tent
> Dwells a God whose love is true!"

For the greatest of all victories is to learn to love others even when they do not know it. This is to be God-like, and to be God-like is to be the greatest of heroes.

Festival Stories.

THE LEGEND OF THE CHRIST CHILD.

A Story for Christmas Eve.

Once upon a time, long, long ago, on the night before Christmas, a little child was wandering all alone through the streets of a great city. There were many people on the street, fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, uncles and aunts, and even gray-haired grandfathers and grandmothers, all of whom were hurrying home with bundles of presents for each other and for their little ones. Fine carriages rolled by, express wagons rattled past, even old carts were pressed into service. All things seemed in a hurry, and glad with expectation of the coming Christmas morning.

From some of the windows bright lights were already beginning to stream, until it was almost as bright as day. But the little child seemed to have no home, and wandered about listlessly from street to street. No one took any notice of him, except perhaps Jack Frost, who bit his bare toes and made the ends of his fingers tingle. The north wind, too, seemed to notice the child, for it blew against him and pierced

his ragged garments through and through, causing him to shiver with cold. Home after home he passed looking with longing eyes through the windows, in upon the glad, happy children, most of whom were helping to trim the Christmas trees for the coming morrow.

"Surely," said the child to himself, "where there is so much gladness and happiness, some of it may be for me." So with timid steps he approached a large and handsome house. Through the windows he could see a beautiful Christmas tree already lighted. Many presents hung upon it. Its green boughs were trimmed with gold and silver ornaments. Slowly he climbed up the broad steps and gently rapped at the door. It was opened by a tall and stately footman. He had a kindly face, although his voice was deep and gruff. He looked at the little child for a moment, then sadly shook his head and said, "Go down off the steps. There is no room here for such as you." He looked sorry as he spoke. Through the open door a bright light shone, and the warm air, filled with the fragrance of the Christmas pine, rushed out from the inner room and greeted the little wanderer with a kiss. As the child turned back into the cold and darkness, he wondered why the footman had spoken thus, for surely, thought he, those little children would love to have another

companion join them in their joyous Christmas festival. But the little children inside did not even know that he had knocked at the door.

The street grew colder and darker as the child passed on. He went sadly forward, saying to himself, "Is there no one in all this great city who will share the Christmas with me?" Farther and farther down the street he wandered, to where the homes were not so large and beautiful. There seemed to be little children inside of nearly all the houses. They were dancing and frolicking about. Christmas trees could be seen in every window, with beautiful dolls and trumpets and picture-books and balls and tops and other wonderful toys hung upon them. In one window the child noticed a little lamb made of soft, white wool. Around its neck was tied a red ribbon. It had evidently been hung on the tree for one of the younger children. The little wanderer stopped before this window and looked long and earnestly at the beautiful things inside, but most of all was he drawn toward the white lamb. At last, creeping up to the window-pane, he gently tapped upon it. A little girl came to the window and looked out into the dark street where the snow had now begun to fall. She saw the child, but she only frowned and shook her head and said, "Go away and come some other time. We are too busy to take care of you

now." Back into the dark, cold street he turned again. The wind was whirling past him and seemed to say, "Hurry on, hurry on, we have no time to stop. 'Tis Christmas Eve and everybody is in a hurry to-night."

Again and again the child rapped softly at door or window-pane. At each place he was refused admission. One mother feared he might have some ugly disease which her darlings would catch; another father said he had only enough for his own children, and none to spare for beggar brats. Still another told him to go home where he belonged, and not to trouble other folks.

The hours passed; later grew the night, and colder blew the wind, and darker seemed the street. Farther and farther the little one wandered. There was scarcely any one left upon the streets by this time, and the few who remained did not notice the child. Suddenly ahead of him there appeared a bright, single ray of light. It shone through the darkness into the child's eyes. He looked up smilingly, and said, "I will go where the little light beckons, perhaps they will share their Christmas with me."

Hurrying past all the other houses he soon reached the end of the street and went straight up to the window from which the light was streaming. The house was old and small, but

the child cared not for that. The light seemed still to call him in. From what do you suppose the light came? Nothing but a tallow candle which had been placed in an old cup with a broken handle, in the window, as a glad token of Christmas Eve. There was neither curtain nor shade to the small, square window, and as the little child looked in he saw standing upon a neat, wooden table a small Christmas tree. The room was plainly furnished, but it was very clean. Near the fireplace sat a lovely faced mother with a little two-year-old on her knee and an older child beside her. The two children were looking into their mother's face and listening to a story. She must have been telling them a Christmas story, I think. A few bright coals were burning in the fireplace, and all seemed light and warm within.

The little wanderer crept closer to the window-pane. So sweet was the mother's face, so loving seemed the little children, that he took courage and tapped gently, very gently, on the door. The mother stopped talking, the little children looked up. "What was that, mother?" asked the little girl at her side. "I think it was some one tapping on the door," replied the mother. "Run quickly and open it, dear, for it is a bitter cold night to keep any one waiting in this storm." "Oh, mother, I think it was the

bough of the tree tapping against the window-pane," said the litttle girl. "Do please go on with our story." Again the little wanderer tapped upon the door. "My child! my child," exclaimed the mother, rising, "that certainly was a rap on the door. Run quickly and open it. No one must be left out in the cold on Christmas Eve."

The child ran to the door and threw it wide open. The mother saw the ragged stranger standing without, cold and shivering, with bare head and almost bare feet. She held out both hands and drew him into the warm, bright room. "You poor dear child," was all she said, and putting her arms around him, she drew him close to her breast. "He is very cold, my children," she exclaimed. "We must warm him." "And," added the little girl, "we must love him and give him some of our Christmas, too." "Yes," said the mother, "but first let us warm him."

The mother sat down beside the fire with the child on her lap, and her own two little ones warmed his half-frozen hands in theirs. The mother smoothed his tangled curls, and bending low over his head, kissed the child's forehead. She gathered the three little ones close to her and the candle and the fire light shone over them. For a moment the room was very still. I

think she must have been praying. Then she whispered to the little girl, who ran into the other room and returned with a bowl of bread and milk for the little stranger. By and by the little girl said, softly, to her mother, "May we not light the Christmas tree, and let him see how beautiful it looks?" "Yes," replied the mother. With that she seated the child on a low stool beside the fire, and went herself to fetch the few simple ornaments which from year to year she had saved for her children's Christmas tree.

So busy were they that they did not notice the room had filled with a strange and beautiful light. They turned and looked at the spot where the little wanderer had sat. He had risen. His ragged clothes had changed to garments white and glistening; his tangled curls seemed a halo of golden light about his head; but most glorious of all was his face, which shone with a light so dazzling that they could scarcely look upon it.

In silent wonder they gazed at the child. Their little room seemed to grow larger—and larger—and larger until it was as wide as the whole world, the roof of their low house seemed to expand and rise higher—and higher—and higher until it almost reached the sky.

With a sweet and gentle smile the wonderful child looked upon them for a moment, and then

slowly rose and floated through the air, above the treetops, beyond the church spire, higher even than the clouds themselves, until at last he appeared to them to be a shining star in the sky above.

Then he disappeared from sight. The astonished children turned in hushed awe to their mother, and said, in a whisper, "Oh, mother, it was the Christ Child, was it not?" And the mother answered in a low tone, "Yes."

A THANKSGIVING STORY.

FOR MY TEN-YEAR-OLD FRIEND, B. F. M.

In the beautiful land of France there lived an humble peasant named Pierre, and his wife Marie. Their home was a tiny house of two rooms. Every day the fresh air blew through it, and every day the windows let in the glad sunshine, and every day Marie went over it lovingly with broom and dust cloth after Pierre had gone to his work; therefore, it was always sweet and clean. Every morning when the village church-bell rang "Bim-bom-bim, Bim-bom-bim" at the matin hour, they both stopped their work, no matter what they were doing, and bowed their heads in prayer, thanking the Dear-God for having cared for them during the night, when in the darkness they had lain sleeping as helpless as infants, and thanking Him also for another new day. Again, when the vesper-hour came at sunset time and the church-bell sounded far and near its "Bim-bom-bim," they would stop their work and bow their heads once more and thank the Dear-God for

having given them strength to do their work. They would ask Him to protect them during the coming night, for they were pious souls, these two young workers, and they loved to think of God as very near and very dear to them. With them, as with most of their neighbors, the "Bim-bom-bim" of the church-bell said, "Come-come-come; to pray-to pray-to God!" Therefore, when they could not go to church, it was a custom with all these people to stop their work and utter a short prayer wherever they might chance to be when the church-bell called. They had all been taught that God could hear them pray in the field, in the shop, beside the kitchen fire, or by the baby's cradle. Yet they loved—all of these villagers—to go to their church, to listen to their organ, to join in prayer, or together to kneel and pray to their Father-in-heaven.

Now in the course of time an old uncle of Pierre's died, and in his will he left Pierre and Marie a field a short distance from the village. This seemed like a rich gift to these poor people, for land was scarce and most of it was owned by wealthy people who lived in the big noisy cities.

"What shall we plant in our field, Pierre?" said Marie, her eyes shining with joy. "With the Dear-God's help we can raise food enough in our new field to last us many, many months."

"Aye," answered Pierre quietly, "with the

Dear-God's help. His rain and His sunshine, and His wonderful earth must do most of the work. But," he added, "we must do our part. We'll have enough to do in digging and planting and weeding."

Then they fell to planning as to what would be best to plant in their new field. Marie brought out their box of seeds which had been saved from last year's small home garden, and together they discussed what to them was an important matter. Should they plant the big white pumpkin seeds, which would grow, in some mysterious way, into long, green vines with large beautiful, velvety leaves, and big golden pumpkins? Marie laughed with glee as Pierre slowly and drolly described how they could watch the queer little green pumpkins change from green to greenish yellow and from greenish-yellow to golden-yellow, and from golden-yellow to orange color, and how, by the time they were orange colored, they would be so big that it would take much strength to lift the larger ones into the wagon.

Of course, Marie had seen pumpkins grow before, and she was very fond of the beautiful pumpkin vines, but then they had not been *her* pumpkins. Now the mere statement of how these smooth white seeds could change (nobody knew why or how) into long, green vines and big yel-

low pumpkins seemed very wonderful to her, and she exclaimed "A miracle! A miracle! O, Pierre, what a miracle! All summer long—every day of it—we can watch a miracle taking place—one of the Dear-God's *miracles!*" To her, anything that men could not do with their hands or by means of the machinery they had invented, but which required the mysterious forces of nature was a miracle. (Perhaps she was right. Who knows just why a pumpkin seed always grows into a pumpkin and never into a cabbage-head or a beet-root?)

Pierre looked into her bright face, which just at that moment was stirred by the thought of the *mystery of the harvest.* "But, Marie," he began, "we can't live all winter on pumpkins. We would soon get tired of the sight of them." Then they both laughed like two happy children.

They had planted seeds many times before and had seen many pea-pods, filled with round green peas, grow from a few peas planted in their small garden plot. They had watched tall stalks of corn, each stalk bearing good, appetizing ears of corn, grow from a single grain of corn, which had been dropped into the silent brown earth. They knew that one of their neighbors had planted half an acre in young tomato plants, grown from tiny seeds, and they

knew that he had gathered *ten thousand* full, ripe tomatoes. They had often seen large wagon loads of grain drive past their house, and they knew also that all this grain had come from a few handfulls of grain sown in the soft plowed fields, and there had come forth thousands and thousands of heads of wheat or barley or rye, each containing many new grains that could be ground into nourishing food. Yet these things had happened year after year, and they had never before thought how wonderful was this strange unexplainable mystery of multiplying of seeds and the creation of fruits and grains and vegetables out of seeds, none of which ever failed to produce its own kind of fruit or grain or vegtable, none ever forgetting to bring forth new seeds ready to do their part in next year's harvest. Oftentimes tiny little seeds were folded up in the heart of a blossom-pod, or packed closely inside of an apple or pear or grape, or securely packed away in some fashion, ready and waiting, when earth and air, sunshine and water were given them, to multiply many times and help furnish food for the human race. But then, as I have already said, Pierre and Marie had never owned a field before. They had never thought of providing their winter's supply of food by planting a few seeds in the ground. In fact, they had taken all these things

as a matter of course and had thought very little about them, of how they grew, or why they grew.

Now they sat handling the tiny brown radish seeds, not much larger than the dust on the roadside, or touching the silky white cucumber seeds, or discussing the advisability of planting their field with wheat or some other grain. At last they decided to plant potatoes, because potatoes would furnish the largest amount of wholesome food. Therefore, when the early spring came, Pierre went to the nearest market town and returned with a few potatoes, not more than a dozen or two.

As he took them one by one from his great-coat pocket he said, "Here, Marie, is our next winter's supply of food." Marie laid aside her sewing and came and stood beside him. Slowly and thoughtfully she picked up one of the potatoes and examined it as if it were a new object never seen before. Then looking up into Pierre's face she said, "How wonderful it is that each one of these little 'eyes' of this potato has in it the possibility of becoming a potato plant and bearing many big and little potatoes. Let me count how many future potato-plants I am now holding in my hand." Then she began to count, "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen,

twenty! Why, Pierre," she exclaimed, "I am holding almost a whole potato-field in my hand!" At that they both laughed heartily. Then Pierre said, "They are good potatoes, all right. If the ground and the sun and the rain are going to do their part in making our future crop of potatoes, we must do our part by giving them good potatoes to work on."

Again there came the new expression of awe and reverent wonder into Marie's eyes. She had been brought up by a dear old grandmother who was very religious and who had taught her her catechism and her prayers and had also taught her that God was very near her all the time; still, she had never learned to look upon the harvest as anything extraordinary; now once more the marvellous mystery of it swept over her as she stood there holding the potato in her hand. "Pierre," she said, softly, "here are only a few potatoes—and yet—they are a message from the Dear-God telling us of His wonderful power and His loving care over us. He has promised never to let His harvest fail. No king on his throne, no great general with his army, no man rich or poor, could make such a promise! Isn't it a tremendous thought? And yet, I never realized it before."

She turned to the window and looked far into the distance as if the thought of the harvest

were growing greater and more marvelous. A vision of its mighty mystery passed through her mind. She seemed to see it at work in all the fields of the earth, each tiny seed doing its part and all working together to bring, with a thousand tints and tones and many kinds of leaves and blossoms, yet without a sound, food for millions of human beings. Pierre looked at her illumined face for a moment, and then leaned over and kissed her forehead. He was not a ready speaker and words did not come easily when he was stirred, and although he did not quite understand what was in Marie's thoughts he was deeply moved by the rapt, reverent expression on her face. He, too, had been brought up in a religious home, and although lacking words, he was in sympathy with her exalted mood. She laid the potato down and putting both arms around his neck whispered, "Dear Pierre, God is trying all the time to tell us how He loves us. Every seed and every flower and every fruit is telling us of His care and love for us."

The following day Pierre plowed their field, turning the soft rich earth over so that it might get the air and absorb the sunshine. The next day he and Marie planted the potato seeds or 'eyes' as they called them, leaving part of the potato attached to each seed "so that the wee

things may have some potato-food to feed on until they are strong enough to eat earth-food," said Marie, who had a way of talking of things around her as if they were human beings.

One bright spring evening some weeks later, Pierre said to Marie, "I came by our field today and I want you to go with me tomorrow morning to see it." The next morning, just before they came to the field, Pierre said to Marie, "Now shut your eyes. I have a surprise for you." She closed her eyes and let him lead her carefully along the road until they came to the field. "Now open your eyes," commanded Pierre. Marie opened them and exclaimed: "O-o-oh!" then said no more, for all over the field which the day before had shown only the silent brown earth, could be seen tiny green specks shining in the sunlight like so many little earth-fairies. There were long rows of them across the field and back again, many times. The whole field seemed full of them. "We will surely have a big crop this year," said Pierre. Marie stood silently gazing at the brown earth specked all over with the tiny upright green points; then suddenly turning her face toward the sky she whispered softly, "Thank you, Dear-God. You are so great. Teach me to love you more."

Pierre opened the gate and went inside and

began inspecting the tiny green plantlings which had so suddenly appeared above the ground. Soon Marie was by his side bending close to the earth. "Just think of it, Pierre," she said, "while we ate and worked and slept, these tiny, tiny little things were growing, pushing their way up through the ground to the sunlight and air, and here they are, so many baby potato-plants, calling on us to help them grow in order that out of the sand and mud they may make good mealy potatoes ready for us to eat and to store away for winter." She paused, then she added, "Neither you nor I could make one single potato if our lives depended on it." "That's so," assented Pierre.

As they walked home Marie said, "I feel so happy, Pierre, I feel just like singing." "Why?" asked Pierre. "Perhaps it is foolish," she replied, "but I feel as if the Dear-God had been talking to you and me personally out there in the field." "I don't think that is foolish," said Pierre. "Doesn't the Bible say that the stars and the clouds tell us of God and that day and night declare His glory?"

All the warm June days they worked, sometimes in their field, sometimes Pierre in his shop and Marie in their home. Oftentimes when the bright sun shone in the windows she would think, "Now the sun is helping the little plants all

over the world to grow, some into carrots and beets, and turnips and cabbages, and some into other vegetables and fruits, and some into wheat and rye and oats, and some into other grains, just as God planned for them to grow. Then she would sing:

"We plant the fields and scatter
The good seed o'er the land,
But it is fed and watered
By God's Almighty hand."

If the day chanced to be rainy she would say to herself, "Now the clouds are giving all the little plants all over the country a drink of water. If we should work all day we could not bring them as much water as the clouds can give them in half an hour. Then she would joyfully sing:

"All good gifts that surround us
Are sent from heaven above.
Then praise the Lord, Oh, praise the Lord,
Give thanks for all His love."

The warm summer days passed swiftly and happily. Some mornings Pierre and Marie would rise at dawn and go to their field to weed it, or again to loosen the earth in their fast-

growing potato hills. At last one warm July day Pierre said, "We will go to our potato-field today and gather our crop of potatoes." All afternoon they worked, digging up round potatoes with pale brown skins, shaking off the earth that clung to the shiny skins, and dropping them into the bags they had brought, until they had filled two large bags and had dug up almost potatoes enough for a third bag. Suddenly they heard the village church-bell pealing its far-off "Bim-bom-bim." Instantly they dropped the fork and spade with which they had been working, and Marie, clasping her hands upon her breast bowed her whole body in prayer, while Pierre doffed his hat and bowed his head, too, and prayed in the same silent way as the bell continued to call "Come-to-pray! Come-to-pray! to-God!"

It so happened that just at this moment a famous painter was passing along the near-by road and glancing up he saw their two figures clearly outlined against the sunset sky, with the spire of the village church in the distance. He saw, too, how poorly dressed they were. The two bags on the ground and the pile of ungathered potatoes told him of the hard work they had been doing, but their faces and the devout attitude of their bowed heads told him still more plainly of the love and reverence that

dwelt in their hearts. Softly and silently he moved away, lest by any chance he should disturb them. As he walked on he thought, "I have been searching for a great theme that I might paint it upon my canvas, paint it so beautifully and truly that it would live long after I am dead, and here now this very hour I have found my subject! What could be greater than to picture to all the world two souls living and loving and working together, and together praying to God, surrounded by evidences of His creative power and the abundance He has provided for their needs?

As these thoughts welled up within him the church-bell still sang, "Come, come, come! To pray—to pray—to God!" and deep down in his heart he said "Aye, I will pray, and I will paint such a picture that all who see it shall feel like praying also." So the famous painter shut himself up in his studio and painted and thought, and I think he must have prayed also. It took him a long time to paint the picture of Pierre and Marie just as he saw them in their potato-field, yet at the same time to tell all the world that *love* and *work* and *worship* were the greatest of all God's great gifts!

Foot Note—This story was told to help a child understand Millet's picture, "The Angelus," and to reinvest the celebration of Thanksgiving with its original meaning of gratitude for the harvest,—an emotion that has stirred the hearts of all nations throughout the centuries of recorded time.